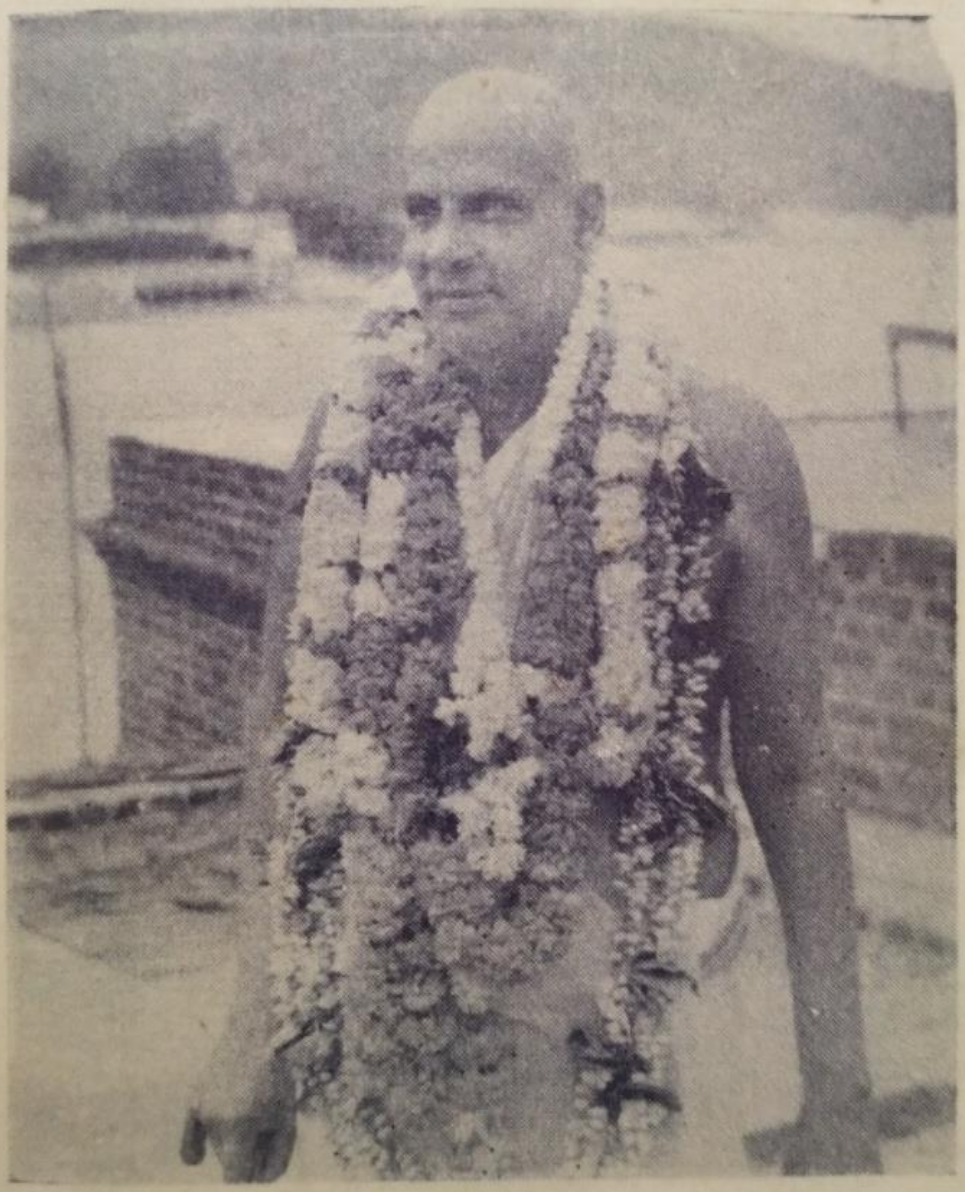
SIVANANDA

SAINT AND SAVANT



By "SRI KAPILA"

Platinum Jubilee Series No. 28

SIVANANDA SAINT AND SAVANT

By

"SRI KAPILA"

VEDANTA FOREST UNIVE THE YOGA SERVE LOVE MEDITATE REALIKE

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

This is one of the most complete biographies of the great sage of the Twentieth Century-Maharshi Sivananda. It embraces within its compass both the illustrious life and the immortal teachings of Sri Swamiji Maharaj, and may well prove to be a sure guide to all seekers after truth, who aspire to exalt their lives, and realize the summum bonum of human birth, viz, God-realization.

P.O Sivanandanagar,

15th January 1958

Publishers.

IN SEARCH OF GOD IN THE ASHRAM OF PURITY AND LOVE

(By Abul Kalam, M.A., Aligarh)

There comes in the life of a man, a moment when he begins to feel that life is not worth living, that there is darkness everywhere, and that suicide is the only way out of despair. It is under these very circumstances, perhaps, that God's grace finds it necessary to operate.

It was sheer grace of God that I happened to pick up 'The Divine Life Magazine. It was the beginning of a new phase in my life, of hope and optimism. In a few minutes, I found myself an altered man.

I was only a school-boy when this idea firmly occupied my heart and mind that God-realization must be the only aim of human life and the only aspiration of man. I never thought of any success in life other than spiritual attainment since then. As a boy, I made a vow to be true, to be sincere, to be obedient and faithful; and with this conviction began all the tests and trials and tortures of my life. I believe that the path of truth and sincerity is very much fraught with pains and sufferings, and one must not try to be good unless he is very brave and very courageous. You are left unarmed in the battle-field.

Sitting at the reading room table, pensive and dejected, as usual, with my head held between my palms, I was pondering over the vanity of worldly lite, over its pains, sufferings, and miseries. My gaze was accidentally fixed on a not-very-attractive magazine. It was 'The Divine Life' published from the Yoga Vedanta Forest University Rishikesh. I picked it up and was lost for some minutes in the photo on the cover. It was the photo of Swami Sivananda. I was overwhelmed. I found, at last, solace and sympathy. It was not like all other photoes. It was like something for which I have no words to express. There was dignity and grace. It radiated a bliss, and above all, there was a neverseen before Divine Smile. I turned the pages of the magazine for some minutes, and felt that I am on some firm ground now. I hurried to the postoffice with a feeling which, I feel, I shall never be able to describe. I dropped a letter which was addressed to the Secretary, Divine Life Society. I waited for the reply in a playful mood. The reply came, ray, the grace of God dawned upon me. It was not a reply from the Secretary, as I had expected, and to whom I had addressed my letter. It was Siva's letter. It was Siva's kind reply. It was from Sivananda to me. It was not like a mere reply of a letter. It was more than a holy scripture for me. Never came across such a writing in my life; never thought of any thing conveying so much love and affection and mercy. Only God can address his devotees like that. I really fainted. I wept. After long long years of sufferings and disappointments for no fault of yours, when you are approached with so profound love and regard, there is a risk of losing your senses under the impress of powerful emotions. The letter begins with 'Glorious Immortal Atman and ends with Thy own Atman.' Who can address you like that? Only Sivananda will address like that. He is God's mercy disguised in human form. I felt that Swami Sivananda has been watching me since my birth and that he knew all that I had undergone.

Siva had invited me in his letter to visit his Ashram whenever convenient, and that I shall get immense bliss, he wrote to me.

I started for the pilgrimage of Mecca at Rishikesh, in the Himalayas. I reached my destination and I found it more universal than the Arabian Mecca. Here, I found the kingdom of God, rule of equality and fraternity, and love the only law of the land. Caste, creed, and sex melts into nothingness, at this place. There is no division of humanity into Hindus and Muslims. There is no category of believers and non-believers. There is the Ashram of God where God's creatures assemble together, pious and sinners, Yogins and Girhasthas, male and female, coloured and white, only to love each other. The church of Rome is the seat of Christians; the temples of India are mostly opened for the caste Hindus, King Saud

will not allow any non-Muslim to visit the holy shrines of Arabia. Lord Siva welcomes all sections of humanity from all the four corners of the world in his Ashram of love and purity and equality.

Since my adolescent age I have beer visiting saints and Sufis in different parts of northern India and, as I have stated, search of the Self and Godrealisation has ever remained my only goal of life. Other things came in its trail. My degrees in Arabic learning, Muslim theology and Islamic philosophy, and, again, my University education upto M.A. class were all so to speak, side-issues. These were roadside pebbles that I picked up in the way to the search of the Self. All the savants and saints to whom I paid my visits, and with some of them I stayed even for some years, were good men, and I have derived benefits from all of them to some extent. But, I could hardly convince myself that Sectarian outlook and God-realisation could go side by side. Then the God realised is Sectarian, not omniscient, not omnipresent. People have divided humanity into religious sects, into caste-people and untouchables, into so many man-made divisions and compartments. Even the so-called religious authorities are preaching and behaving like that. They have divided God and they have divided humanity. Thanks God, I have found Swami Sivananda now. In him I have found a true saint of my aspirations, a universal Guru, a world-guide philosopher. He is the confluence of all religions and all sects. He is a meeting place of all castes and creeds. He is the Triveni of all philosophies and all isms. He is all love and all affection.

I stayed at the Sivananda Ashram for two weeks on my first visit in July last. I have visited the place twice since then. I have watched Swami Sivananda very closely. I have found him a source of delight and bliss. He has a towering personality and, yet, very simple and very easy to approach. He is so very very amiable. He smiles like a child and his smile radiates joy and bliss. His smile is infectious and inspiring. His words are soothing, healing, and encouraging He behaves with kindness, and charm, and dignity. He carries a feminine grace about him. After meeting Sivananda, I have developed a notion that God is child like and womanlike; and that He is not a horrible thing to be afraid of

Each time I visited Sivananda Ashram, Swami Sivananda offered me some books written by him. He distributes his books like Prasad. I have never seen or heard of such Prasad in any Ashram. Thousands of volumes of his books, worth of hundreds of thousand of rupees are distributed free of cost by Swami Sivananda every month. He distributes so many things at a time. He distributes medicine among the patients, food among the poor, and money among the needy. For the students of physical culture he conducts Yoga-classes, for the aspirants of God-realization he gives direction for meditation and Dhyana, and to the intellectual people he offers his highly-inspiring books

As an author, Swami Sivananda is unprecedented. His writings are incomparable and his style is singular. The subject of a boon by Swami Sivananda is difficult to specify. Wisdom is the only subject of his writings. For information and knowledge you read any author of any language you like. But, for wisdom and insight you must read only Swami Šiva. Nanda. If you want sound health, if you want a charming personality, if you want success in you business, if you want to be a philosopher, or if your want to be an enlightened man, only write a card to Swami Sivananda and ask for his books. Even one out of his thousand books is enough for your success in this life and in life hereafter. If you have no time for his big volumes only ask for a pamphlet. You will find the essence of all his writings int it. But you must remember that his books are so interesting that you will be lost in the charm of his style and you may miss the practice. ‘An ounce of practice is better than a ton of theory’ says Sivananda. Reading of his books makes you a philosopher, its practice helps you to find yourself. You have to make your own choice

Books are divided into different categories according to their subject-matter. We have books on philosophy and religion, we have books of poetry and literature In case of Sivananda’s books this division exists no more. A book by Swami Sivananda dealing with highly philosophical matters and religious

truths is equally a work of Art and literature, and, at the same time, it teaches you the Art and Science of everyday life. Have you ever heard of any such author, of any such philosopher, of any such writing and style? You may not have heard. But, I have come across such a man. I have met him. I have spoken to him, and I have stayed with him as his quest. He offered me his books in several volumes. He bestowed upon me his blessings, and he inspired me. His name is Sivananda and he lives at Rishikesh. He is a physician, he is an author, he is the chancellor of a University, he is a saint, he is every-man's quide, and he is the beloved of his devotees. Have you ever heard of a beloved philosopher or of a saint-physician? You may not have heard but I have met him. I shall give his address. The name of his abode is Ananda Kutir. He dwells in A.K.

Before reading Swami Sivananda, I shared a belief with others, that philosophy is a tedious reading; that books on religion are dull and monotonous and that writings of saints are only for those who shun the society and live in the forests. And now I will advise the lovers of novels, fiction, and poetry to go through Sivananda's philosophy and Sivananda's religion in his own writing. I am sure, you will give up your novels and fiction, and books of poetry only to enjoy Sivananda's style. You may not be a religious man, nor you need necessarily believe in some philosophy. You may read him for the sake of reading and for the sake of pleasure. You will find, in his books, the suspense of a novel, the charm of a story-book and the rhythm and beauty of a poem. Yet it remains a book on philosophy and it describes the experiences of a saint.

I had, formerly, a belief that God-realization is a very hard task. One can hardly venture to tread this thorny path. I was told that God can be attained only through austerities and penances, that one is compelled to give up every joy and comfort of worldly life to find God, and that one must be always pensive and constantly fearing. And even then, some people would say that after all these hardships one can only attain heaven and be saved from hellfire, that God cannot be realized in this world, and that he can be realised only after death and in the heaven. But, curiously enough, Swami Sivananda says that God-realization is not a very difficult task, that every man irrespective of caste and creed can realize Him, that He can be realized in this world, in this very life and that we need not wait for another life in the heaven to realize God. Swami Sivananda says that no austerities and penances are required. One need not put himself to torture. One need not go to the forest, or to Badri and Kedar. God can be realized in one's own house, without giving up the comforts of worldly life. Sivananda says that all that is required in the path of Yoga is to be moderate, moderate in food and drink, moderate in action and speech. He prescribes a very simple and short cut way to God-realization. He only says, "Serve, love, give, meditate, realize."

Good God! How simple! How easy! Who will miss the chance then? And lo! Swami Sivananda says that God-realization is a real play of hide-and seek. How easy he has made this path which I had taken to be so frightening and so testing! Dear friends! Let us not miss this golden opportunity. Let us join Siva's Ashram! Let us become his disciples and devotees! Let us take part in the real play of hide-and-seek, and, in the end, let us have personal encounter with the Divine. Long live Swami Sivananda! Long live his devotees!! Long live Divine Life Society !!!

SONGS OF SIVANANDA

Composed by: Sri Santosh

Set to music by: Sri

Leslie Sheppard of London

1. TO SIVANANDA WE LOOK

(Tune: The Fox)

In this World of storm and strife

When hatred and violence spoil our life,

When ego is acting at its height

We turn to Sivananda, Sivananda, Sivananda.

With his clear light we all unite

And turn to Sivananda, Sivananda, Sivananda.

He teaches us to know the Self.

Beyond the world of power and wealth.

To serve and love and spread good health.

In the aim of Sivananda, Sivananda Sivananda.

To serve and love and spread good health

Is the aim of Sivananda, Sivananda, Sivananda.

2. SIVANANDA GUIDES US

(Tune: Polly Wolly Doodle)

Sivananda's words are a mariners compazв,

Guiding you to your harbour

Wind, storm and tide cannot stay your way

Aspiration moves you forward

Follow Him; you can ascend the

Ladder of liberty, the rock of regard,

The peak of Triumph, the hill of harmony.

3. PRAYER TO SIVA

(Tune: Down in the Valley)

Sivananda, the world-filling-light
The light that dances at the centre of life,
Divine Life Society, quiding devotees!
Teach us to serve thee with heart's delight
Teach us to serve thee, with balanced mind.
Your guiding hand helping all alike.
Hold our heart strings because mind is kite.
We offer ourselves to thee Lord of Light.

4. THE CALL DIVINE*

(Tune: "All People That on Earth Do Dwell")

All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to Siva with cheerful voice.
Serve Him with mirth, His praise foretell.
Sing ye before Him and rejoice.
Enter His Ashram then today;
Approach with joy to His Kutir,
Serve, love, repeat His name always,
For it is seemly no to do.
For why the Lord our Siva is good.
His mercy is for ever sure,
His truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure.

5. SIVA MAKES US FREE

(Tune: "Little Mohce")

As we awaken to another new day,
Let our lower nature pass right away,

*These inspirational songs are variations on well.known hymns, or new words to well-known Anglo-American folksong tunes.

No more self-seeking, no fear or strife,

Divine Love will quide you and transform your life.

Leave off your shackles of ignorance and fear,

Wipe out all hatred let tolerance appear.

With Siva to quide us; our lives can be free,

From all limitations and disharmony.

With Siva to guide us; our lives can be free,

But we must all struggle unceasingly,

To discover the Self, and serve humanity.

Divine Love will lead us to immortality.

6. HUMANITY IS MARCHING ON
(Tune: "John Brown's Body")

The teachings of Siva have come to earth again,

To banish from the world all its bitterness and pain.

The battle-cries are "Peace on earth" and "Brother

hood Must Reign".

Humanity is Marching on.

(Chorus:

Glory, glory Hallelujah

Glory, glory Hallelujah!

Glory, glory Hallelujah!

Humanity marching on!

The march of the Sadhaks of Light has begun,

Their banners are flying and gleaming in the sun,

The shout goes up to heaven that all men are one.

Humanity is marching on.

(Chorus)

Shoulder to shoulder, let's join the happy throng,

With Siva's word to guide us and keep our spirit strong.

To free the hearts of all mankind we sing our battle.

Song:

Humanity is marching on.

Chorus☺

7. UNTO IMMORTAL BLISS
(Tune: "Barbara Allen")

When we have a smile for every joy,

A tear for every sorrow,

The mind is bound in chains of self,

We need a guide to follow.

When we make excuses for every fault,

And prayers for each disaster,

The mind is wavering unrestrained,

We need to find a master.

Sivananda's words are like an arrow

Straight to its target flying.

His Yoga teaches us the way

To immortal bliss undying.

8. SIVANANDA: LIGHT DIVINE
(Tune: "Yankee Doodle")

Love Divine all loves excelling,

Light of Atma shining,

Send thy rays to us today;

Our hearts and minds inspiring,

(Chorus☺

Sivananda Light Divine,

Sivananda Light of Love,

Sivananda Wisdom Light,

Our hearts and minds inspiring!)

Guide us through the trials of life,

Break down our old defencer,

Show us the way to realise

Beyond the world of senses.

(Chorus)

9. HAPPY HEARTS SING HIS PRAISES

(Tune: "Praise My Soul the King of Heaven"

Praise the work of Sivananda,

To his feet thy tribute bring,

Seek his grace and blissful guidance.

Happy hearts his praises sing.

Sivalanda!

Sivananda!

Happy hearts his praise sing.

Walk the path of Sivananda,

Walk the way of Wisdom Light.

Kindness, Service, Love and knowledge.

Follow in his footsteps bright.

Sivananda!

Sivananda!

Follow in his footsteps brigh.

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDAJI MAHARAJ

PEARLS ON THE SHORE OF WISDOM

(By Sri Swami Sivananda)

Compiled by Sri N. Ananthanarayanan, New Delhi

GRACE OF GOD

1. Guru is necessary to attain God-realisation.
2. Even for learning the alphabet or a little arithmetic, you must have a Guru; what are we to say of the knowledge of Brahman then?
3. To light a candile, you need a burning candle. Even so, an illumined soul alone can enlighten another soul.
4. Competent disciples are never in want of competent Gurus.
5. You can find your Guru at your door, if you really want him.
6. Even if Lord Krishna remains with you, He cannot do anything for you, unless you are fit to Receive Him.
7. Books written by realised persons can serve the purpose of a Guru till you come in personal contact with a realised Yogi or adept. You can also get help from senior aspirants in the path of Yoga.o
8. He who is able to clear your doubts, he who is sympathetic in your Sadhana, he who does not disturb your beliefs but helps you on from where you are, he in whose very presence you feel spiritually elevated-he is your Guru.
9. Once you choose your Guru, implicitly follow him.
10. Listen to all, but follow one. Respect all, but adore one. Gather knowledge from all, but adopt the teachings of one master. Then you will have rapid spiritual progress.
11. The life of the Guru is a living sermon to the sincere disciple.
12. Guru is God. A word from him is a word from God.
13. Grace of God takes the form of Guru.
14. Guru's grace works in the form of Sadhana in the aspirant.
15. The Guru will only guide you. You should yourself tread the path.
16. Now a-days people want a drop of water from the Kamandalu of a Sannyasi and desire to enter into Samadhi immediately. If you have got such delusion, give it up immediately.
17. Obedience to Guru is better than reverence.
18. Every unpleasant incident in life is a test of your trust in Guru.
19. Even greater than a mother's love for her own child is the love of Guru for the disciple.
20. A God-realised Satguiu never dies in the ordinary sense, He is ever present as he has identified himself with the Immortal, Cosmic Being. Worship the Guru always.

THE ABSOLUTE REALITY

1. God only IS.
2. He who denies the existence of God denies himself.
3. God is One in all and all in One.

4. God is the Ultimate Reality.
5. That which never decays or changes is real.
6. There is always one thing or other to satisfy each and every felt want. So, there must exist something that can satisfy the want for supreme happiness and freedom from all pains. That something is God or Brahman. So, God exists. He is All-Bliss.
7. The musk-deer does not know that the fragrance of musk is emananting from its own navel. It wanders about here and there to find out the source of this smell. Even so, the deluded ignorant Jiva is not aware that the fountain of bliss is within. Himself in the Atma. He is running after external objects to get happiness.
8. God cannot be comprehended, but can be realised.
9. The Upanishads profess only one God (Brahman).
10. God is certainly one; He has no second.
11. The Absolute Reality must be one; there cannot be two absolutes.
12. There are many gods in the Vedas. In the scriptures of other religions, they are known as angels.
13. Hindus worship many gode. But, they are all different aspects of the one Reality.
14. God reveals Himself in the form in which the devotee loves Him most.
15. One genuine tear of a devotee brings God on earth. Tears should come from the heart and not from the lachrymal gland.
16. Faith reflects God; intellect veils Him.

BLUENESS IN THE SKY

1. This world is a mirage.
2. All names and forms are unreal like shadow, water in the mirage, blueness in the sky.
3. All that changes is unreal.
4. Unreality of the world is the truth in ultimate analysis. But, in relative existence, one cannot deny it.
5. Though finite, the world is a means to Reality.
6. This world is a bridge. Pass over it and reach the abode of life eternal; do not build over it.
7. The world is a vast university. Nature is the best teacher.
8. To me, the whole world appears as a ball of fire. To me, the whole world appears as a huge furnace wherein all living creatures are being roasted.

LEELA OF BRAHMAN

1. God is Being. World is becoming.
2. A king played the part of a beggar for his own sporting; a sage played the part of a fool for his own sporting. Even so, this world is a sport or Leela of Brahman or the Absolute.
3. Brahman or Truth is the essence in which the universe has its being, from which it is born and in which it dissolves at the end of each world-cycle.
4. Just as sugarcane-juice pervades the sugar. Cane, just as salt pervades the water when a lump of salt is dissolved in it, just as butter pervades milk, so also Brahman pervades all the objects, animate or inanimate.
5. The world is charged with the splendour, glory and grandeur of God.
6. Whatever you see is God. Whatever you hear is God. God works through your hands and eats through your mouths.
7. Brahman or the Absolute is not affected by the world-process that is going on within it, just as the rains from a cloud do not wet the sky.

8. The lower is valid only until the Highest is realised. Even so, the world is valid only until God is realised.

GOD IN BONDAGE

1. Man is God in disguise, Who puts on a grab in fun, but quickly forgets His true identity.
2. God in bondage is man and free from bondage is God.
3. The human body is the moving temple of God or the chariot of the Soul. Keep it healthy, pure and strong.
4. "Dust thou art, to dust returnest" was not spoken of the Soul.
5. Men is the most filthiest animal on this planet with ever-oozing discharges from the nine abominable drains. The skins of tiger, lion, deer, cows etc., are very, very useful. But, the stinking skin of man is only the prey for wild jackals.
6. A real cobbler is one who talks on matters relating to skin, body and its relations and not at all one who manufactures shoes.
7. Man is nothing. Napoleon planned much; but, at last found himself a prisoner in St. Helena.
8. Man is nothing. Adolf Hitler planned to conquer the world; but, later brought ruin upon Germany and himself:
9. To be born is the greatest crimel To have a body is the greatest sin! Become bodiless and attain the abode of eternal bliss and immortality.

FULLNESS OF LIFE

1. Religion is the relationship between the three fundamental principles-God, world and the indivi. Dual.
2. Religion is not a denial of Life. It is fullness of life. It is life eternal.
3. Religion is practical philosophy; philosophy is theoretical religion
4. Philosophy is for ever searching, inquiring, questioning; religion is sensing, realising, experiencing.
5. Unconscious movement is called natural evolution. Conscious evolution is Yoga or the practice of religion.
6. One religion is as good as another. One road or path to the Supreme is as good as any other road or path.
7. Cows have different colours. But, the colour of milk is one. There are different kinds of roses; but, the scant is one.
8. The same type of jacket cannot suit all people. Individual temperaments and traditional backgrounds differ. Hence the need of different religions.
9. Diversity is the order of creation. Religion is no exception to it.
10. Sons and daughters of the Koran and the Granth Saheb! Children of Avesta and Vedas! Blessed votaries of the Buddha and Christ! Be you all as one.
11. Religion is better understood when it is more and more practised.
12. Many preach Buddhism, but no one gives up the desires and Himsa. Many preach Christianity, but no one practises love and forgiveness. Many preach Islam, but no one recognises the brotherhood of man. Many preach Hinduism, but no one realises the divinity in all.
13. Hence the world is wicked, not for want of truth, nor on account of religions; but, alas! It is wicked for the lack of true followers of these ideals and religions.
14. Let religion create saints and Yogins rather than Mandirs, Masjids and churches.

THE TRANSCENDENTAL MYSTERY

1. This world is a relative plane of good and evil. Remember this point at all times. Try to live happily in any place, under any condition.
2. Good and evil are twin forces. They are twins born of the same father. They are "Dwandwas" or pairs of opposites. Existence, They have no independent
3. There is nothing called absolute evil is no permanent damnation. There
4. Evil exists to glorily good. This is its raison d'etre
5. The 'why' of the evil can only be understood when you get Atma Jnana. Do not rack your brain now. It is a transcendental mystery.
6. Out of evil, good often cometh. Destruction is necessary for regeneration, renovation and reconstruction.
7. Sin is a mistake committed by the ignorant Jiva during his journey towards Sat Chit-Ananda abode. Once you make up your mind to tread the path of Truth, all sins will be destroyed.
8. The sinner of today is the saint of tomorrow. Hate the ain, but not the sinner.
9. A rogue is not an eternal rogue. A prostitute is not an eternal prostitute. Put these people in the mpany of saints They will be newly moulded and will be transmuted into saints with virtuous qualities
10. In the modern age, Adharma does not come down embodied in a person like Ravana, Kumbhakarna or Sisupala Every man today has elements of all these demons within him.

THE CAMEL AND THE PRICKLY-PEAR

1. The camel eats prickly pear and it injures its mouth. Yet, it goes on eating prickly pear again. People may suffer again and again; yet they cling to worldly life.
2. There is a grain of pleasure in objects; but the pain mixed with it is of the size of a mountain.
3. One anna of pleasure is mixed with fifteen annas of pain.
4. Pleasure that is mixed with pain, fear and worry is no pleasure at all.
5. There is not an iota of happiness in this world.
6. Worldly pleasures are like scratching for itching.
7. Happiness is a mental state. It does not de. Pend upon money or possessions.
8. You cannot buy happiness. It has to come from within.
9. The cause of pain is pleasure. The cause of death is love for sensual life.
10. The body is the source of all pains.
11. Pain is a blessing from God. It is His mercy and grace. It is His spiritual favour. It is the means for your spiritual uplift and emancipation.
12. Suffering purifies the heart, develops strong will, patience and endurance and turns the mind towards God.
13. Suffering is another name for the process of growth or evolution.
14. Worry is sheer waste. It never did nor will ever do good.
15. Nitya Sukha and Parama Shanti can be had only in God.
16. Peace is not in the heart of the carnal man. Peace is not in the heart of ministers, advocates, business-men, dictators, kings and emperors. Peace is in the heart of Yogins, sages, saints and spiritual men
17. Peace is not in money, estates, bungalows, wealth and possessions. Peace does not dwell in outward things, but within the Soul.
18. Withdraw yourself from external objects; meditate and rest in your Soul. You will realise everlasting peace now.

FAITH AND FREE WILL

1. God is not responsible for the wealth of a man or the poverty of another. Everyone bears the fruits of one's Karmas.
2. Sin is worked out in Karma through sorrow and suffering.
3. Even if the law of Karma is inexorable, there is the scope for divine grace Grace comes through penitence, austerity and devotion.
4. Penitence does not alter the law of Karma. It is an act that has its fruit like any other act.
5. What one has to reap cannot be altered by the individual; but, its recurrence can certainly be chec ked by self-effort.
6. Believe me, man CAN obliterate his Samskaras by Purushartha or right exertion. He is NOT a creature of environment or circumstance.
7. Man is the master of his own destiny. He Bows an action and reaps a habit; sows a habit and reaps a character; sows a character and reaps a destiny. So, he is entirely responsible for his Prarabdha Karma.
8. The self-effort of today becomes the destiny of tomorrow.
9. Prarabdha is under his Adheena or control. He will become an absolute fatalist and a slotbful, Inactive man, if he attributes everything to a preordained destiny or Prarabdha. Let him awaken his free will. Let him avail himself of his Para nartha (will).

YOGA AND VEDANTA

1. Union with God is the goal of human life and human endeavours
2. Joga means union with God. The practice of yuga leads to communion with the Lord.
3. Man is a composite being. He has a mind, a heart, intellect and body And the different yogas train these different aspects of one's personality and make him an integral personality
4. The four main spiritual paths for God-realisa tion are karma yoga, bhakti yoga, raja yoga, and jnana yoga.
5. Karma yoga is the way of selfless service. Bhakti yoga in the path of exclusive devotion to the Lord. Raja yoga is the way of self-restraint. Jnana yoga is the path of wisdom.
6. Psychology is a branch of Raja yoga which deals with the control of mind.
7. You must adopt the yoga of synthesis I like synthesis. I like synthesis in all spheres of activity.
8. The yoga of synthesis alone will bring about integral development. Yoga of synthesis is suitable for this modern age. Modern saints are advocates of this yoga only
9. Youth is the best period for yoga-abhyas. This is the first and the foremost qualification of a sadhak.
10. Brahmacharya is to the yogi what electricity is to an electric bulb.
11. Cowards can never be moral Cowards can never become yogins or saints.
12. I always say that a dacoit can become a good vedanti if his energy is turned in the spiritual direction; because, he is absolutely fearless and has no deha adhyasa.
13. Vedanta is the end of the Vedas. It is the realisation of oneness.
14. Vedanta is the science and the art of living one's life at its highest and the best.
15. Even a child can be taught vedanta provided the teacher knows very well what vedanta truly means and how it can be applied to the different stages of life.
16. Vedanta does not say that one should detest the world or isolate oneself in some world other than this. It does not proclaim that anyone should forsake his duties or put on castor-oil face or behave in an intolerable manner.

17. Vedanta says that one should perform one's prescribed duties in life with the spirit of non-attachment and of dedication to the Supreme Being, that every aspect of one's life should get consummated in this Supreme Consciousness.
18. In vedanta, Truth is aimed at through the power of intellect.
19. The final experience is that God and Truth are one and the same.

PRAYER AND PILGRIMAGE

1. Prayer is communion with God. Prayer is the miracle by which God's power llows into human veins. Therefore, kneel down and pray.
2. Thy breath has been given to you by the Lord, to be spent in prayer. Kneel down and pray; but, let the prayer not cease when you rise. Prayer should be life-long and your life should be one long prayer.
3. When the wisdom of politicians and social leaders fails, kneel down and pray; for, a pair of praying hands are mightier than rulers of state and winners of battle
4. The kitten mews and the cat runs to it and carries it away. Even so, the devotee cries and the Lord comes to his rescue.
5. From despair, man learns prayer.
6. Pray not for relief from suffering, but for strength and endurance to bear it.
7. Pray to the Lord to make you desireless. Have one strong desire and let it be for attaining God-realisation
8. Everyone is an idol-worshipper The Muslim worships Kaaba Christian worships Jesus on the Cross. The mind wants a prop to lean upon. Without the help of some external aid, in the initial stages, the mind cannot be centralised.
9. It is not only the pictures or images in stone and wood that are idols, Dialectics and leaders also become idols So, why condemn idolatry?
10. Glorious devotees of the Lord Lose yoursell in His Name. Forget yourself in His Praise. Offer your heart at the glorious altar of His Lotusfest.
11. Kesp not back a ray of your mind, a corner of your heart, an atom of your soul from Him, the Lord of your being.

THE PRECIOUS JEWEL

1. The Name of the Lord is the bestower of eternal bliss, perennial joy and everlasting peace. The Name is your sole prop, support, refuge, solace, centre, ideal and goal.
2. God is the one doctor for all sicknesses. Rely on Him alone. The Names of God are the most potent, unfailing tonics, sure panaceas, well-tried elixirs, sovereign specifics for all ills.
3. The precious jewel of the Lord's Name is forgotten for the sake of the broken glass-pieces of sensual enjoyment. Deplorable? Is this not lamentable and
4. God's Name is the greatest treasure. Accumulate the wealth of Divine Name.
5. Recite the Lord's Name with feeling and devotion.
6. Mantra is Divinity encased within a sound structure.
7. The repetition of a mantra has a mysterious power of bringing about the manifestation of the Divinity, just as the splitting of atom manifests tremendous forces latent in it.
8. You must have a rosary (japa mala) always in your pocket or neck and underneath your pillow at night when you go to sleep. It will remind you of God when you forget Him owing to force of maya or avidya (ignorance).

9. Make no distinction between Guru, Mantra and Devata.

THE CHANNEL FOR GOD'S WISDOM

1. A paint is a channel through whom the wisdom of God flows.
2. A saint lives in God, possesses God.
3. He is a spiritual washerman. He applies the soap of devotion and knowledge and removes the spots of sin in worldly people.
4. A sage forgets himself utterly and lives but for the sake of others.
5. A king is honoured in his own place; but a sage is honoured everywhere.
6. A sage or a yogi enters the society as the sun enters a patch of cloud
7. The main glory of India is in her rishis and sters.
8. Realised souls are not rare. Ordinary, ignorant, worldly-minded persons connot easily recognise them.
9. To benefit from the company of saints, you have to prepare yourself first.
10. Saints and supermen have been moulded out of difficulties and adversities.
11. The very sight of Great Men is sufficient to purify a soul. The very contact with the dust of a Mahapurusha's feet is sufficient to remove all impurities and bestow illumination and emancipation.
12. The ink of a sage or a yogi is more precious than the blood of a martyr.

ASPIRATION AND ACHIEVEMENT

1. Unless knowledge alters one's life, it is useless.
2. Without practice, idealism creates fatalism in man.
3. There are pundits or learned men who will have the whole scriptures on their lips; but, they will not go down their throats.
4. Teacher, teach thyself first Physician, heal thyself first. Lecturer, lecture to thyselt first. Reformer, reform thyself first.
5. Selflessness and love are not creeds to be taught, but ideals to be exemplified, demonstrated and radiated.
6. Be noble not only in aspiration, but also in achievement.
7. A man who says that he will do something 'as far as possible' betrays his weakness. He will yield to the very first temptation.
8. Talk less think more Brag less, practise more. Promise less, do more.

THE SERPENT OF TIME

1. Just as the frog that is hanging in a serpent's throat is yet desirous of eating its flesh, even so, men of the world are dosirous of enjoying the worldly objects, although they are being swallowed by the Berpent of time.
2. A man loses his father. On the following day, he loses his son also Yet he is foolish enough to think that he will live for ever (when the persons who came before and after him have died) and postpones sadhana.
3. The moment you are born, death exists side by side with birth,
4. Life is a link in the chain of time. If you waste time, you waste life.
5. Do not waste your precious hours. It is enough that you have wasted so many years in idle gossiping. Enough, enough of the troubles you had all these days in satisfying your senses.
6. Be sincere and start doing sadhana from this moment.
7. Do not say "From to-morrow I will be reqular." That "to-morrow" will never come

8. Just as worldly people who are engaged in business are very careful about their time, so also spiritual aspirants are very careful about their time and they use it in contemplation of God.
9. There are no holidays in spiritual life Eternal vigilance and ceaseless meditation characterise the essence of divine life.
10. Do not postpone doing good deeds, for there is no certainty of life.
11. What you propose to do tomorrow, do that today; what you propose to do today, do this very instant.

CONQUEST OF MAYA

1. Sex-instinct is the greatest urge in human life. Sublimate it.
2. The whole maya or avidya is nothing but body-idea of sex-idea. The whole spiritual sadhana is calculated to destrory this one idea. The extinction of this one idea alone is Moksha!
3. Without perfect brahmacharya, you cannot have substantial spiritual progress. There is no half-measure in the spiritual path.
4. People are much weaker now than they were years ago. That is because, students and young men do not know how to keep up brahmacharya. They do not know how to protect themselves from the onslaught of Satan.
5. Passion can be effectively checked. There are patent methods.
6. Marriage is a curse and a life-long imprisonment. It is the greatest bondage.
7. More beggars are brought forth into this world through lust. He who has understood the magnitude of human sufferings will not dare to bring forth a child.
8. Wife is only a luxury. It is not an absolute necessity.
9. Hate lust, but not women.
10. Married life, if lived in a perfect ideal manner, is no bar to the attainment of Mukti.
11. A good woman is to man what banks are to the river. She is the rhythm which leads him to Truth. Her love is God's grace.
12. Woman is in no way inferior to man The home is a co-operative organisation. It flourishes on the principle of division of labour.
13. To a lady, the husband is indeed the highest ornament of all ornaments. Being separated from him, she, however beautiful, does not shine.
14. In the West, the woman is wife. In India, the woman is the mother.
15. The Hindu women have been the custodians of the Hindu race.

VAIRAGYA BORN OF VIVEKA

1. If you have no real sustained vairagya, you will find no improvement or progress in spirituality. Vows, austerities, energy and meditation will leak out like water from a cracked pot.
2. Vairagya is purely an internal mental state. A man may remain in the busy world amidst various luxuries, women and wealth and yet he may possess perfect vairagya, while a sadhu who lives in a cave in the far-off regions of the Himalayas may be greatly attached to his kamandalu, stick or piece of cloth.
3. Solitude is not in monasteries or forests. Solitude is in one's own heart.
4. Renunciation is not running away to the caves of the Himalayas. Only aspirants with para vairagya are fit to do that on the part of others, it is only cowardice.
5. Stand up, O bold aspirant and egoism. Renounce
6. Vairagya does not mean duties and responsibilities of life. Abandoning social

7. Vairagya is good so far as it goes. But, it should not lead the sadhaka to the self-exclusiveness which is none other than a subtle form of selfishness.
8. Reason should strengthen faith; logic should supplement intuition. This shall bring about vairagya born of viveka.
9. Renounce this world. Renounce the desire for Moksha. Renounce renunciation itself. Then you will become THAT. You will become ITSELF.
10. First acquire and then renounce.
11. A beggar cannot claim to be a "tyagi." What has he to renounce?
12. Even if you wish to amass wealth for the sake of righteous deeds it is better for you to deve. Lop more dispassion. Instead of washing the hands after touching the filth, it is better not to touch it at all.

POOJA OF NARAYANA

1. Give the mind to God and the hand to work.
2. Work never degrades a man is Pooja of Narayana. Unselfish work
3. Work is worship. All works are sacred. There is no menial work from the highest viewpoint, from the viewpoint of the Absolute, from the viewpoint of Karma Yoga.
4. Even scavenging, when done with the right spirit and mental attitude, is Yogic action. Even a scavenger can realise God in his own station of life by service.
5. If you really want to grow in the spiritual path, you must do all sorts of service daily till the end of life. Then only you are safe. Do not stop doing service when you have become a famous Yogi.
6. Raga-Dwesha, instinctive preferences and aversions, have no room in a Karma Yogi. In animal life, they are a necessity. In man, it is necessary to moralise them. In divine life, they should be abandoned.
7. Act as a trustee, not as an owner or proprie. Tor. You will not be bound, as there will be no "mineness."
8. Two letters lead to death; three lettere lead to Immortality. Mama or mine leads to death; Na mama or not mine leads to immortality.
9. Self-surrender does not mean the negative state of giving up your duties, but it is the positive state of discharging your duties efficiently and unselfishly, feeling that you are an instrument in the hands of God.
10. Self-surrender is not the surrender of one's duties; it is the surrender of one's self. The self is the little self that plays a very powerful and dangerous part in our life. The name given to it is Ego. It is a Latin word which means 'I'

THE MARK OF DIVINE LOVE

1. Human love is selfish and hypocritical.
2. Human love is all hollow. It is mere animal attraction.
3. Love of flesh is denial of love itself.
4. Divine love is different from the love of a wife or brother or children.
5. Divine love is motiveless, but not without purpose.
6. Cosmic love is the very antithesis of love of any one particular thing or being.
7. Those who have developed pure, cosmic love, are very very rare in this world. But, those who talk of universal love are plenty.
8. A man who is struggling to develop cosmic love and realise Him through love cannot keep anything for himself more than he actually needs for keeping the life going

9. Love, in its dynamic aspect, becomes selfless service, a thirst to serve humanity and to work for the commonweal.
10. God asks a man not his caste or creed, but only if there is love in his heart.
11. If you have the same intensity of love for God which you have for worldly objects, you will attain God-realisation this very second.

BACK TO THE DIVINE FLAME

1. Sparks of the Divine Flamel Back to the Divine Flame; be one with the Divine Flame.
2. You must have Atmaswarajya; you must be. Come an Atmasamrat. That is real independence.
3. Your only duty is God-realisation. All other duties should only serve as a means to this final goal.
4. Do not surrender yourself to the scientists. They are not able to explain anything.
5. Real living is not self-indulgence, but selfexpression.
6. Secular experiences are partial, while spiritual experience is the experience whole.
7. Destroy Avidya. You will understand the 'why' of this universe.
8. Before you attempt to solve the secrets of the universe without, master the universe within.
9. You need neither art nor science, neither study nor erudition for God-realisation, but faith, purity and devotion.
10. If you serve God with a fraction of the zeal with which you serve mammon or your wife and children, you will certainly realise God within a very short period.
11. People will mock at you; be silent. People will insult you; be silent. People will spread evil rumours about you; be silent. Stick to the spiritual path. Do not swerve.
12. Have intimate connection with none but God. Mix little with others.
13. If you really want God and God alone, kick this world mercilessly.
14. The company of worldly-minded people is as dangerous, if not more, as the company of a woman to an aspirant.
15. To serve God and mammon at the same time is impossible.
16. You cannot enjoy the bliss of the Self and the sensual pleasure in one and the same cup. You cannot have light and darkness at the same time.
17. God first, world next, if at all you want the world.
18. Divine life is not a rejection of life and its activities, but a transformation of it into the divine.
19. You make a living by what you get, but you make a life by what you give. Always give, give, give. This is the secret of abundance and divine life.
20. A life in the physical plane is a definite preparation for the eternal life in Brahman.
21. Success in life cannot be calculated by bankbalance, landed property and bungalows, but by virtuous actions and God-realisation which bring supreme satisfactions.
22. Never fall a victim to fruitless regret. Today is the best day. Today is the day of your new birth. Start Sadhana now.
23. Kindly do not delay. The spiritual seed must be sown in you now, when you are young. You must offer a beauttful flower, a pure mind, to the Lord-not a rotten, tainted mind later on.
24. Spiritual discipline is not military discipline, It is not merely submitting to rules. It is essentially self-discipline.
25. Perfection does not mean a change of time, place and circumstance. It is rising above them all.
26. If you want to get microscope lens, you will have to grind, grind and grind. If you want to realise that Infinite Brahman, you will have to practise, practise and practise; you will have to free yourself from pettiness

27. To earn Rs 100, to become a Head Clerk, you have to study for 15 years and work for ten years. What is the nature of your goal? It is immortality; to attain this, should you not strive hard?
28. Those who desire to grow in morality and spirituality, those who wish to evolve rapidly must keep a daily record of their actions.
29. If you can record your actions every hour, your growth will be very rapid.
30. Subject yourself to keen self-analysis everyday without fail. Oust all sentiment in this process. Become an intelligent, serious and earnest self-CI.D.
31. Try to become a versatile genius.
32. What one man has achieved can also be achieved by another. This is an immutable law of nature.
33. An optimist sees an opportunity in every difficulty; a pessimist sees a difficulty in every opportunity.
34. If I ought, I can. Be of strong will and good cheer.
35. If you develop one important virtue, all other virtues will cling to you. Develop that virtue in which you are hopelessly lacking.
36. The sublime wisdom of Sri Sankara and the supreme compassion of Lord Buddha should shine in your daily life.
37. Be softer than butter, where kindess is concerned; be harder than steel, where principles are at stake.
38. Strengthen the body and then do spiritual Sadhana
39. Bodily mortification alone cannot lead to Enlightenment without the calming of passions and discipline of the mind.
40. Just as striking at an ant-hill will not destroy the snake within, so also no amount of bodily torture can kill the mind within.
41. Conquer the mind and then conquer the entire universe with your spirituality and divine force.
42. Reform yourself first through prayer, meditation and cultivation of divine virtues and then preach or try to reform the society or the community.
43. There is no knowledge without meditation. An aspirant churns his own soul. Truth becomes manifest.
44. Imitate not. Be original. Meditate. Bring out your own Upanishad and Gita from the heart.
45. In you meditation, you must not seek any. Thing. You already possess everything. You must know and realise it.
46. Look into your heart. Find out what special talent God has given you. Develop it and use it for the good of others.
47. Vigilant among the careless, awake among the sleepers, restrained among the indulgent, refle. Ctive among the thoughtless, the wise aspirant boldly marches forward, reaches the goal now and attains immortality and eternal bliss.

AUTOBIOGERAPHY OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

I took Sannysa in 1924 in Rishikesh.

I am childlike in my Swabhava. So, I mix with all. I become one with all. I respect all. I do salutations to all first. I always speak sweetly. I am full of educative humour.

I cannot suppress the spirit of service in me. I cannot live without service. Service has elevated me Service has purified me. I rejoice in giving. I always give.

I lead a simple, natural life. There is a fountain of youth in me. I beam with joy. I observe fasting, resting airing, bathing, breathing, exercising, sunbathing and enjoy freedom, power, beauty, courage, poise and health.

I love nature, music, art, poetry, philosophy, beauty, goodness, solitude, meditation, Yoga and Vedanta. I am perfectly tolerant and catholic. I am merciful and sympathetic. I have spontaneous and unrestrained generosity. I am bold and cheerful. I can bear insult and injury. I am forgiving. I am free from vindictive nature. I return good for evil I serve that man who has injured me, with joy.

I respect all saints and prophets of all religions. I respect all religions, all cults, all faiths and all creeds. I serve all, love all, mix with all and see the Lord in all, I serve the poor. This is my delight.

I do mental prostrations to asses, dogs, trees, bricks, stones and all creatures. I respect elders and Sadhus I obay. I shampoo the legs of sick persons and Sadhus. I spend everything I do not keep anything

To raise the fallen, to lead the blind, to share what I have with others, to bring solace to the afflicted, to cheer up the suffering are my ideals.

I am a strange mixture of service, devotion, Yoga and wisdom. I am a follower of Sri Sankara. I am a Kevaladwaita Vedanti. Ia I am not at all a dry lipVedantin. I am a practical Vadani.

I talk to others on things which I have myself practised I practise and advocate the Yoga of Synthesis. I practise Ahimsa, Satya and Brahmacharya. I do not argue much.

I served my masters with great sincerity and intense faith and devotion I wandered without food during my Parivrajak lifa. I slept on the road. Side at night without clothing in winter. I ate dried bread with water

At the present moment, I am the richest man in the whole world. My heart is full. Further, all the wealth of the Lord belongs to me now. Hence, I am King of kings, Emperor emperors, Shah of Shahs, Maharaja of Maharajas. I take pity on the mundane kings. My dominion is limitless. My wealth is inexhaustible. I attained this through Sannyas, renunciation, untiring selfless service, Japa, Kirtan and meditation,

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SIVANANDA
SAINT AND SAVANT

CHAPTER I

THE BIRTH OF THE SAGE

"O babe, I worship! Thou art He! I see the rosy light, the foot-sole marks, The soft-curled tendril of the Swastika, The sacred primal signs, thirty and two, The eighty lesser tokens. Thou art Buddha, And thou wilt preach the Law and save all flesh Who learnt the Law, though I shall never hear. Dying too soon, who lately longed to die; Howbeit I have seen Thee. Know, O King! This is that blossom on our human tree Which opens once in many myriad yearsBut opened, fills the world with wisdom's scent And Love's dropped honey; from thy royal root A heavenly lotus springs; Ah happy House!"

Southern India is the traditional nursery and cradle of India's spirituality and religion. Here were born the most highly intellectual, perfect and celebrated saints like the incomparable Sankara, 1 Ramanuja,2 Madhwa,3 Nimbarka, and Vallabha,5 not to mention the numerous Alwars and Saiva saints for the grand purpose of spiritually enlightening and uplifting mankind immersed in the quagmire of worldliness.

1. A brilliant exponent of the Advaita or Non-dualistic Philosophy who lived about the 6th century A.D. His writings and apostolic zeal brought about the downfall of Buddhism in India.
2. An ardent exponent of the Vishishtaadvaita or Philosophy of Qualified Monism who flourished about the 10th century A.D.
3. A popular exponent of the Dvaita Philosophy Unqualified Dualism who flourished in the 12th century A.D.
4. A great exponent of the Bhedaabheda Philosophy or Dualistic Monism who lived about the 11th century prior to Madhwa.
5. A very powerful exponent of Suddha Advaita or Philosophy of Pure Monism who flourished in the 14th century and was a contemporary of the great Chaitanya Mahaprabhu of Bengal and Namadev of Maharashtra.
6. The 12 Vaishnava mystics. Their poems or hymns are known as "Nalayira Divya Prabandham" full of devotion to Lord Vishnu.
7. Chief among them being Appar, Sundaramurthy, Manikkavasagar and Thirujnana Sambandar whose poems addressed as hymns to Lord Siva are available in the form of a single compendium known as "Thevaram" in Tamil.

In the historical and ancient family of the Saiva Saint, Sundaramurthy (800 A.D.), famous for his sweet devotion to Lord Siva and extraordinary psychic powers unbelievable in the materialistic world of today in the line of the inimitable celebrated Sanskrit scholar and genius, author, commentator, poet, philosopher and devotee of Lord Siva, viz., the hoary Appayya Dikshitar (1554 AD); Neelakanta Dikshitar, brother's son and contemporary of Appayya Dikshitar and a great Sanskrit scholar, devotee of Lord Siva and minister to the Pandyan king at Madura; Appayya Sivam, a great Sanskrit scholar many of whose monumental works remain unpublished up to this time, a devotee of Lord Siva and a direct uncle of the hero of this work in the remarkable 19th century that ushered into this world such famous saints as Ramalinga Swami (1823 A.D.), Sai Baba (1850-1900), Upasani Maharaj (18701918), Ramakrishna Paramahamea (1836-1886), Vivekananda, Aurobindo and Ramana Maharshi, was born at a most auspicious hour of dawn under the benefic Star Regulus (Bharani) and in the rare nativity of Cancer (Karkataka Lagna) that gave this world Lord Rama of Ayodhya, with all the benefic and malefic planets favourably posited in the zodiac, on Thursday the 8th of September, 1887 the future Luminary of the Soul-

World, the world-celebrity of today, the Saint Sivananda, my Spiritual Lord and Preceptor. Blessed be his Name!

At the time of the Maharshi's birth Vengu Iyer the pious father and Parvathi Ammal the devotional mother of the child were in the heydays of their prosperity and happiness and living at sacred Pattamadai situated ten miles away from the town of Tinnevelly in the remote south. Vengu Iyer was the Tehsildar of the place attached to the Ettiapuram Estate. Pattamadai blessed by the waters of the ever-flowing Tamraparni river so sacred in Hindu lore as referred to in the Introduction was renowned for the manufacture of the finest quality of mats in the world as well as for its being the home of some of the most eminent musicians of the land.

The parents of the new-born babe were overjoyed to receive a new light into their home, for they believed him to be none other than Lord Siva him. Self, the third aspect of the Hindu Trinity, graciously blessing their home in all its completeness with his luminous presence.

Vengu Iyer had two other sons elder to the new one. It is noteworthy that all the three made their mark and distinguished themselves in different fields. The eldest, P.V. Veeraraghava Iyer became the Personal Assistant to the Raja of Ettiapuram; the second, P.V. Sivarama Iyer started his career as an Inspector of Post Offices and in course of time attained to a high position in the field; while the third, P.V. Kuppuswami Iyer, as he was called, was destined and earmarked for his great mission in the spiritual field, where he shines today as a WorldTeacher, as the Maharshi Sivananda.

The Brahmin astrologers of Pattamadai after carefully casting and scrutinizing the horoscope of the babe Kuppuswami beamed with joy and were unanimous in their opinion that if he remained in the family, he would attain to great heights of worldly prosperity, reputation and riches, but if he chose to renounce the worldly life, then he would become a World-Teacher (Jagadguru), unique, distinguished, glorious and celebrated, at whose feet the very rulers of the land will bow down in humble obeisance and homage, -a prophecy that has materialized with unerring precision and cent per cent accuracy.

There was great rejoicing on earth and heaven. The gods rained a shower of flowers of the choicest kind on Vengu Iyer's home which was humming with intense activity. The Brahmins of the place were treated to a rich and sumptuous feast amidst music and singing and elaborate festivities, for the hearts of the parents were throbbing with unspeakable joy, hope and expectation. All joined with the poet and sang l 1

"Be there a paradise here on earth,

It is this, it is this, it is this."

CHAPTER II

THE BOYHOOD OF THE SAINT

"Innocent zouth is a priceless possession not to be squandered asway for the sake of momentary excitement miscalled pleasure."

-Mahatma Gandhi

Vengu lyer seems to have been particularly anxious and to have spared no pains in the matter of the upbringing and education of his boys. Parvati Ammal too, so we presume, played her part exquisitely well in the tender care and attention she bestowed on her children and the first everlasting lessons she imparted to them in her highly responsible capacity as the mother.

Kuppuswami is said to have begun his studies when he was just five years old, as is the prevalent custom in all Hindu homes. Being endowed by birth and heredity with talents of a superior order, no wonder the boy made rapid and remarkable progress in all directions within an admirably short time.

In his eighth year he was invested with the sacred thread in strict accordance with the highest traditions of the land, an event of deep significance in the life of a Brahmin, symbolizing his entrance into Brahminhood proper, a second birth as it is generally called, a stage of life in which one prepares himself to launch upon a suitable career, to light the great battle of life nobly and well, to take upon himself the burdens and responsibilities of the family life from off the shoulders of the parents and to become an ideal householder.

We are told that the boy Kuppuswami had a stately build of body, strong and muscular, with sinewy arms and a broad chest, the healthiest and the bravest among other boys, the envy of all, always bent upon childish pranks and innocently mischievous sport. We are further told that the wealthy Raja of Ettiapuram once complimented Kuppuswami for his bodily development.

Kuppuswami was versatile, all-round, energetic, intelligent, obedient to teachers and elders, ever ready to serve and lend a helping hand to others, ever alert with deep penetrating wide open eyes, a very receptive and impressionable mind and, above all, very systematic and methodical in his work and studies.

He demonstrated a supreme capacity to put forth the mightiest of efforts needed for the achievement of anything on which he set his heart, a rare thirst for learning and acquisition of knowledge of every kind, a prodigious memory, tremendous zeal and enthusiasm in all he did, always studious but never a bookworm, the sharpest and brightest boy in the class, the young idol of his comrades and friends, winner of all the enviable and best prizes at school anniversaries, debating and sports competitions, the favourite of his teachers, lord of music of the classical variety but never the cheap vulgar type, gifted with a rich, deep and resonant voice, ever smiling, ever cheerful, a true sport willing to take victory and defeat with an equanimity that can easily humble down the most seasoned philosopher or the disciplined Yogi. Such precious qualities and traits adorning a blooming youth of noble family and high birth could not but have roused feelings of admiration and affection in the hearts of one and all who had the privilege and the fortune of coming in contact with him in his teens.

When Lord Ampthill the Governor of Madras visited Kurumalai Hills in 1901 ahunting, Kuppuswami was chosen by common consent to sing the song of welcome at the Kumarapuram railway-station and the

success of the performance brought him encomiums from all quarters. He became the hero of the day, the cynosure of all eyes.

Kuppuswami, it is certain, showed no particular religious or devotional marks in these early years save that he used to assist his father in his morning ablutions, being the youngest of the family, by fetching flowers for the worship, etc., and listening, whenever time and circumstances permitted him, to the recitation of the Bhagavad-Gita, the Upanishads, hymns to various Gods and God. Desses, and other allied scriptures by his father and statue-like silently wondering what the meaning of those recitations could be.

Passing his Matriculation in 1901 he joined the S.P.G. College at Trichinopoly. Trichinopoly in those glorious years was a very prominent seat of learning, in many respects eclipsing even Madras the capital city of the province and producing through the factories of its colleges the finest and the most brilliant type of geniuses for which the South has always been noted. Moreover it was and still is the citadel and baation of Vaishnavism with its gigantic and awe-inspiring temple of Sri Ranganatha only five miles away at Srirangam, an important centre of Hindu orthodoxy and a perennial place of pilgrimage attracting devotees from Kashmir to Kanya Kumari, from Karachi to Calcutta, throughout the year.

The S.P.G. College was a very famous one. Reverend H. Pakenham Walsh, the present Bishop of Coimbatore, was its great Principal. It was a missionary institution pervaded by a truly Christian atmosphere, where, probably for the first time in his life, young Kuppuswami got the opportunity to study the Holy Bible with that earnestness and sincerity that have always characterized his scholastic career, to mix freely with the ideal missionary fathers of the College, to imbibe their remarkable spirit of selfless service, their ways of life and purity of souls, their utter devotion to duty above all other considerations, qualities that in later years stood him in good stead and raised him to the exalted level in which we find the sage today.

Moreover, the study of the vast English Literature, the inspiration he must have derived from its dreamy Tennyson when he sings:

“For more than once when I Sat all alone, revolving in myself

Word that is the symbol of myself The mortal limit of the Self was loosed, And past into the Nameless, as a cloud Melts into Heaven. I touched my limbs, the limba

Were strange, not mine and yet no shade of doubt, But utter clearness, and thro’ loss of Self The gain of such large life as match’d with ours Were Sun to spark-unshadowable in words,

Themselves but shadows of a shadow-world.”;

From its Browing when he says!

“A beggar he prepares to plunge,

A prince he rises with his pearl.”;

From its immortal Wordsworth when in a state of ecstatic bliss he blurts:

“Whether we be young or old Our destiny, our being’s heart and home, Is with Infinitude, and only there”;

And again while walking one fine evening with his little daughter along the shore of the lakes overlooking his home the poet soliloquizes:

“Dear child, dear girl that walkest with me here, If thou appear untouched by solemn thought, Thy nature is not therefore less divine. Thou liest in Abraham’s bosom all the year, And worship at the temple’s inner shrine, God being everywhere, when we know it not”; When Coleridge so exquisitely sings!

“He prayeth best who loveth best, He loveth best who loveth all”;

When Tennyson in another immortal piece declares with his prophetic vision “More things are wrought by prayer Than this world dreams of.

Irom John Milton’s “Paradise Lost” and “Paradise Regained”; from Dante’s “Inferno” from Bacon’s Essays; from Emerson’s mysticism; from Pope’s unassuming simplicity of philosophy of life from Herbert Spencer’s high idealism and, above all, from Shakespeare’s deep mastery of human psychology and understanding of the immutable Laws of Nature must have all made an everlasting effect on his mind, as they have undoubtedly made upon the minds of innumerable young collegians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with their own incomparable and priceless results.

This is not to be construed by my Indian brothers and sisters as an exaggerated or undeserved tribute to English Literature and the part it has played in shaping the destinies of many a great and distinguished leader of thought or action in India. While the ancient Sanskrit and other literatures of the soil have their own incomparable merits, I venture to point out that it is the study of the English Literature by our Indian people that has produced a Gandhi, a Nehru, an Aurobindo, a Radhakrishnan, a Rajagopalachari, a Raman, and many others. Let us not be so ungallant as to deny a tribute where one is due.

The British rule in India bestowed upon the nation at least one imperishable good, maybe with the best of intentions, maybe unintentionally eve It is the introduction of the study of English in schools and colleges. It is the study of this glorious and oceanic English Literature that systematized our thinking, broadened our vision, strengthened our intellect and enabled us to fully appreciate the benefits of individual as well as national freedom and liberty. It enabled us to understand the great. Ness of man and the greatness in man. It enabled us to study Science on a systematized basis and partake of their scientific progress and achievements in various ways. Last but not the least, it won us our freedom without bloodshed. It has wrought an imperishable change in our national life and outlook. The British rule has gone and gone for ever, never to return, but the English Language, I am afraid, has come with an immortal mission. It has come to stay and stay for ever perhaps!

For over 150 years our schools and colleges pul. Sated with English language, English literature, English way of life, thought and conduct, for good or bad. Generation after generation in India studied English with avidity, preferred to speak in English rather than in the vernacular, to think in English, to dream in English, nay, to meditate and pray to God in English! Every inch of our body from head to foot throbs, as it were, with English. That is our experience honestly speaking and, I believe, that it is also the experience of many of my brothers and sisters in this great land. Our sons and daughters, grandsons and granddaughters too will feel the effects of this undeniable experience.

By all means study Sanskrit and other national and provincial languages. The British never discouraged these. By all means evolve a national language. It is very necessary to maintain the independence and solidarity of the nation. But there will be disputes between the Madrasi and the Bengali, between the Tamil and the Telugu as you already find these symptoms. It will take not 15 or 20 years as has been modestly computed to replace English by Hindi which has been accepted as the lingua franca of India but at least half a century. Till then it will hold the field as the national and international language.

If you study Sanskrit it is good. If you study Tamil you will know how vast, deep and ancient is its literature. I believe similar is the case with Bengali By all means these languages and their literatures should be deeply studied. But what harm is there if we study English also side by side? We will certainly not lose our freedom, will we? The Englishman expects some expressions of gratitude from us. Let us not deny him what he so richly deserves.

If you want to send away English, bag and bag. Gage, along with the British battalions, and have nothing to do with the British on any account, and then you want to build your nation on exclusively national lines peculiar to your own culture, I say, it is not possible. For, you still keep the motor-car, the aeroplane, the radio and the other scientific inventions, all products of the British and American genius. If you send these also along with the language, you are really brave! Can you do that? There will be no real progress unless you keep an open mind, unless you adopt a receptive attitude, unless there is the give-and-take spirit.

To come back to our subject. Young Kuppuswami did not stop with poetry alone. He was a voracious reader. He read Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Emmanual Kant, Schopenhauer, Carlyle, Macauly, Voltaire, Rousseau, Tolstoy, and several other great thinkers in his leisure hours.

In 1903 he came out of the Intermediate Arts examination with flying colours. In the same year he also took his Honours in Tamil Literature, an age. Old test held annually by the illustrious Tamil Sangham of Madura and was quite familiar with the high philosophical compositions and devotional hymns of the Saiva saints and Alwar mystics of unforgettable memory.

Certain domestic occurrences of which we have little inkling brought the brilliant collegiate career of Kuppuswami to an end almost abruptly. In spite of our best efforts to get at the causes that led to his discontinuation of further studies, we could go no further. This sudden break to the dreams of his education must have had their deep marks on his young mind attended with the inevitable painful feelings too deep for words. He now began to seriously think of choosing a suitable career for himself.

CHAPTER III

THE COMPASSIONATE DOCTOR

“Myself when young did eagerly frequent Doctor and Saint, and heard great Argument About it and about; but evermore Came out by the same Door as in I went.”

-Omar Khayam.

The heart of the young doctor had already expan. Ded. It had transcended the realms of individuality and was filled with the life-giving waters of univer. Sality. The purpose of life began slowly to unfold itself before him. Yes, life has a purpose, and a good meaning too; and a course of intense preparation has to be undergone, the human in man has to be transmuted into the Divine, even as a nugget of unrefined gold undergoes a series of purificatory processes on the hot crucible ere it shines in all its full fineness.

Like Aurobindo, the illustrious Sage of Pondicherry, Dr. Kuppuswami saw that service of fellowmen alone could do the trick. Without any hesitation, he joined the medical line, qualified himself as a full-fledged doctor and, true to his burning spirit of independence, set himself up as a budding healer of ailments in Trichinopoly.

Money was no consideration to him, even in those tempting days. He concentrated more on the pulse of the patient rather than on his purse as is the case unfortunately with physicians and surgeons of the day, big and small. He gave free prescriptions and

Medicines to the poor and the needy, and relieved them of their pains. His sympathy, his compassion, his genial temperament, his generosity and, above all, his forensic skill and ability brought him popu. Larity. His income also swelled.

He started a popular and high-class medical journal called the “Ambrosia” which he edited and managed with great distinction and success for a few years.

He specialized in Tropical Medicine, Malaria, Surgery, Pathology, Ophthalmology, Obstetrics, and in fact in every branch of the delicate profession with diligence and industry His agility, nimbleness of hand and steps and his dexterity coupled with his deep understanding of human nature and consideration for the susceptibilities of his clients brought him a roaring practice, income and fame. Service and love were his two watchwords. These shone in him in their divine colours

Amidst the noise and bustle of his busy life the pursuit of philosophical studies was not the least neglected. Rama Tirtha’s “In the Woods of God. Realization”; the works of Yogi Swami Satchidananda of Cuddappah and Yogi Ramacharaka; the voluminous and profound writings of that great lady and friend of India, Mrs. Annie Besant of the Theosophical Society; the rare works in Tamil of the 18 Eternal Perfect Beings considered as old as the Vedas; the inspiring poetical works of that incomparable genius St. Thayumanavar and St, Ramalingaswami; the Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy with its deep stress and emphasis on Lord Siva as being the Primal Being; the Bhagavad-Gita, the Ten Classical Upanishade, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata-all these claimed his impartial attention, analysis and examination.

The Hatha Yoga Postures, especially standing on the head for hours at a stretch sometimes, stongly fascinated him. He preferred to concentrate on the ingoing and out-coming breaths accompanied simultaneously by the holy chant of “Soham” and “Hamra.” He would compose and sing rapturous tunes

to Siva, Vishnu and Shakti with such emotion. Love and faith that the very walls around him would have shed tears or melted, had he so willed. Laugh not at these expressions; they are deliberately used meaning as such. Regularly every day at the fixed hour at night, curtailing the hours of sleep, he would sit on the Perfect Pose (Siddhasana) and practise intense and deep meditations, often leaving the mortal frame where it was and soaring in the vast limitless lumi nous regions of "Aham Brahma Asmi" (I am Brahma). He was scrupulous in the choice of what he ate and drank. Not that he was given to luxury or extravagance, but addicted vigilantly to a Yogic menu as prescribed in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, Siva Samhita, Gheranda Samhita and the Gita a menu that became admirably conducive to his conquest of mind.

All these practices coupled with the service of the poor, the sick and the needy with the right mental attitude, doubtless, paved the path for his future conquests The tender petals of his heart soon blossomed forth into its universal and cosmic sweetness, bringing within its all-encompassing orbit the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the saint and the sinner, the Hindu and the Muslim, the Christian and the Jew, without the slightest trace of distinction of caste, colour, religion or nationality.

In 1913 he sailed by the SS. 'l'ara' for the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malaya States, where he took up a lucrative post as the Doctor-in-Charge of the Negri Sembilan Hospital. Here he served the sick and the ailing with a devotion that would have excited the curiosity and the envy of the greatest apostle of God upon earth since Adam. His devotion to his work was at once religious and divine. Work has always been worship of the Lord to his mind, the highest and the best form of worship at that. Many a miracle has been attributed to his skill. It is said he cured cases pronounced as incurable and gave life to patients given up as good as dead. More than drugs, he attached greater importance to the Name of God which can always work wonders and miracles whenever He was pleased to work such wonders. Did not Jesus, in the Name of the Father in Heaven, cure lepers and restore life to the dead by the power of Faith alone! Dr. Kuppuswami was an embodiment of kindness, generosity, love and compassion to one and all without the least tinge of evil in them.

In 1920 he shifted to Johore Bahru near Singapore and joined service in a larger hospital where Drs. Parson and Green were his esteemed colleagues and co-workers. These and several other European specialists liked Dr. Kuppuswami Iyer very much for there was something in him that drew them all irresistibly towards him. They discovered in him a genius, who was all attention to his patients, who administered medicine and diet with his own hands, cheered up the patients to normal health by his sweet words, loving smiles and magnetic personality. He seemed to possess a "Magic Touch." The very sight of him gave hope to the disheartened, strength to the weak and life to the dying. From the inner recesses of his psychic being he seemed to radiate joy and health all around him.

Blind He became a Member of the Royal Institute of Public Health, London; the Royal Asiatic Society, London; and an Associate of the Royal Sanitary Institute, London.

He published several useful books on Medicine such as 'Household Remedies', 'Fruits and Health', 'Obstetric Ready-Reckoner', 'Diseases and Their Tamil Synonyms', 'Fourteen Lectures on Public Health', etc., besides numerous other contributions to periodicals such as the 'Malaya Tribune' to which he was also a Sports Correspondent for sometime.

Malaya and particularly Singapore rightly called the "Paris of the East" is a land of romance and light pleasures, night clubs, attractive theatres, dance halls, and other enchanting places of light entertainment to which the unwary naturally resort and fall easy victims wasting their money, energy and time in demoralizing and immoral pleasures. But Dr. Kuppuswami, young though he was, was proof against these pitfalls, snares and temptations. He withstood these as a rock amid a turbulent storm. In fact these

pleasures, miscalled as such, did not trouble or worry him at all they were of no use to him. He was ever busy as a bee, busy at the hospital, busy at home in the early hours of the morning and the late hours of the night. Only the "idle mind is the devil's workshop" and his was not one by any means. We are told he slept only four hours or so even in those days; but he slept away those four hours quite undisturbed and in complete rest. Reading, writing, pondering, building, rebuilding, constructing and reconstructing, he found little time for mean debasing pleasures or idle gossips.

At the hospital he was considerate, loving and kind to the ward-boys, nursing orderlies, sweepers and scavengers and always took up their cause and championed them in a crusading spirit. He was dear alike to patients and fellow-doctors, nurses and ward servants. He was mightily painstaking, methodical and above all, conscientious in his work. He did full justice to every patient under his charge with a religious fervour. The medical history sheets, temperature charts, admission cards and other allied medical documents of his patients were always complete in all their minutest details. Praise and approbation poured forth upon him and his sterling work from unapproachable quarters.

In his private practice, he was not motivated by greed or lust for the yellow metal. His motto was service, service above all other considerations. There are innumerable accounts depicting his large and generous-hearted behaviour, his intense pity for the poor and the afflicted and the down-trodden. His saintly willingness to share all he had with the stranded and handicapped, his transparent sincerity and genuine love of fellow-beings, his abiding interest in all those who came into contact with him, the moral, material and other succour he was willing to offer to anyone who managed to touch the tender chord of his heart, and so forth. To him "an ounce of practice was worth more than all the tons of theories." In Oliver Goldsmith's phraseology, "his house was known to all the vagrant train, he chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain." Little wonder, therefore, Dr Kuppuswami became a prominent, highly influential and leading figure of the place much sought after by the elite and the gentry. But, in spite of his affluent circumstances and the roaring professional success, he lived a simple life and took shelter and delight in philosophy and religion, the eternal delights of a wise man.

He concentrated more on the development of the heart rather than on a stony intellect. Had the choice been offered to him, he would have unhesitatingly chosen the Buddha's or the Christ's heart instead of the sharp intellect of a Plato or a Sankara. Often he prayed: "Lord, grant me a large heart as Thou didst for Buddha and Christ." The highly significant words of the Saviour, Christ Jesus rang in his ears with reverberating effect: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; for where your treasure is there will your heart be also. Therefore, I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these.

Dr. Kuppuswami was liberal and catholic in his views. He drew his inspiration freely from the Bible and the Zend Avesta, from the religions of ancient Greece and Rome, from Plato and Hegel, from Schopenhauer and Nietzche, from Guru Nanak and Kabir besides the Upanishads. He was like the proverbial swan capable of taking the milk alone when the same is placed before it admixtured with water. The substance of religion was what mattered to him, not the non-essential details of it over which the modern arm-chair politicians lay unnecessary stress with a view to gain their base political ends. It reading the Bible could develop in him in howsoever a small measure the Love that Jesus breathed so fully, it was good enough for his purpose. He never argued; he avoided useless discussions on religious matters where the possibilities of heated controversies loomed large before his vision. On such occasions

me remained neutral, without taking sides and watched as a silent spectator. He nodded his head iof assent with the unforgettable Poet-Philosopher, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore while recollecting:

“The time has come when we must cultivate world-wide spiritual comradeship by training ourselves to realize the inner core of the truth in ALL RELIGIONS, feeling glad when we discover the spiritual wisdom which we find in our own creed, expressed in those of others, with their special characteristic idiom, accent and emphasis.”

He never read a book without taking copious notes from it. He always chose the right book and made deep red and blue pencil marks on the margins or right underneath the lines. Sometimes he would note his own comments on the lines in a few graphic words somewhere on the same page. Thus he steadily grew in knowledge and wisdom supreme. No wonder, then, he shines before you today as a veritable encyclopaedia of knowledge in all its branches. Justifiably he could have sung with Emerson:

“I am the owner of the sphere Of the seven stars and the solar year, Of Caesar’s hands and Plato’s brain, Of Lord Christ’s heart and Shakespeare’s strain.”

Solomon-like, Dr. Kuppuswami “preferred Wisdom before sceptres and thrones, and esteemed riches nothing in comparison of Her.

CHAPTER IV

THE AWAKENING

"What is the price of experience? Do men buy it for a song, Or wisdom for a dance in the street? No, il is bought with the price Of all that a man hath, his wife, his home, his children."

-William Blake.

Self-denial and self-effacement consistently prac. Tised with religious devotion for fifteen years amidst the tumult and turmoil of the mundane world wrought an incalculable metamorphosis in the per sonality of Dr. Kuppuswami.

He was shining in spotless purity. His interest in things earthly faded, as it were, yielding place to a consuming passion to renounce his all and go in quest of the Land of Unhampered Freedom and Joy, "the Limpid Lofty Celestium," the final Goal of Life.

Not a moment could he delay; not a moment there was to waste. No mere metaphysical wriggling and wrangling could quench his thirst any more. If there is a GOD, he must have HIM, now and here. "Do or die" flashed across his mind like the thrill of a lightning. He could think of no third alternative.

So in the highly momentous year of 1923, inspired by the highest and the sublimest of ideals, distributing his worldly possessions and goods to those who wanted them, taking nothing likely to entangle him again in the inextricable cobweba of material life or frustrate the cherished desire of his heart, entrusting his mortal frame to the four merciful winds as also the other elements of Dame Nature, with a clean heart and a cleaner conscience, staring Destiny nonchalantly in the face, eagerly seizing the great golden moment of inspirational exaltation and thrill, with a clear visualization of himself as seated and absorbed in profound contemplation on the summit of a high pinnacle in the Himalayas while huge surging sea of humanity looked from the distant bottom towards him in dazzled bewilderment and surprise, Dr. Kuppuswami cheerfully shouldered the Cross, submitted his resignation and arrived at the smiling city of Madras one blooming evening.

Referring to this unique type of renunciation, Dr. Pattabhi Seetaramayya, the distinguished President of the Indian National Congress asked the Maharshi recently: "But why did you renounce the world? What exactly was the cause?"

"Samskaras!" was the categorical reply of the Maharshi.

"That's right," agreed the learned Doctor, and sank into deep thought, unwilling to disturb the profound serenity of the Maharshi and probably disinclined also to drag him into a conversation, not quite palatable by any means to a good Sannyasi in this hoary land-about his worldly past as it rune counter to the scriptural injunctions.

However, this sort of vaque or evasive reply, though emanating from such a distinguished figure as the Maharshi himself, could scarcely convince or satisfy the journalist in me. I felt that the answer the Maharshi gave could be conveniently used as a safe formula by every one who happened to be in the ochre-coloured robes. I did try to broach up the subject at his feet once or twice but, strange to say, the moment I stood before him grim and determined to see through, I lost my guts, and decided not to be so rude or mean. I turned back.

A very practical and positive difficulty was experienced by the writer, while engaged in typing the contents of this chapter. "Why did the Maharshi renounce the world?" I asked myself. He has been consistently preaching the highly consoling tenet of his philosophy, viz., Be in the world, but be out of it; live like the water on the lotus-leaf. "Could not the Maharshi himself live that way and reconciled his precept or profession with his practice? Does he mean to preach one thing for others and practise quite another himself? Could I honestly accuse him for duplicity? No, surely there must be very cogent reasons for his renunciation which he has in his characteristic pithy style of expression compressed in a word. What could those reasons be, then? What harm precisely is there, if I dash up to his room and ask him to reveal the secrets, if secrets I could call them, except perhaps that I throw overboard certain conventions and traditions? The reader in the West with his rational and scientific approach to a subject must be convinced and thoroughly satisfied with the flow of the stream of the Maharshi's life.

Summoning all the courage of which I am capable, I stood before the Maharshi the next morning, touched his feet as is my wont, and put the question straight to him.

'Lord Buddha renounced the world to solve the problem of pain. Pain was the immediate cause of his renunciation. I feel inclined to take the view that in your own case also some such immediate cause must have been there. No doubt the word 'Samskaras' provides the clue, but some further elucidation is needed for being incorporated with the story of your blessed life to satisfy the enquiring propensities of the intelligent readers, both east and west."

The Maharshi smiled a broad smile and remarked: "With the exception of Dr. Pattabhi Seetaramayya, none else had the boldness to ask me this question straight in my face. You have always the right to ask me anything. Here you are. From my early age spiritual tendencies dominated my being. Consequently I evinced enthusiasm and interest in reading works on all sorts of philosophies, which in its turn led me to seek the beneficent company of holy and truly religious persons. While in Malaya I did come in very close contact with certain highly evolved Yogins like the Hatha Yogi Krishnaji, a stationmaster, and several others Sainte who used to visit the place from time to time from India. These contacts proved extremely helpful indeed. Then in my professional field also it was my fortune (or misfortune) to battle with pain, with suffering and death almost every day of my life. I did this bit of the job with a truly philosophical and enquiring attitude of mind, always brooding over death and sorrow and suffering that tore up the humanity so mercilessly to pieces every moment. Though by the grace of God it did fall to my humble lot to save some dying souls, yet I was not infallible. I was deeply conscious of my human limitations, Many died. I saw them sinking down before my very eyes and under my very nose. Could none save these helpless creatures? What could Death be? But Death remained an eternal mystery, though I knocked my young head against its portals again and again. Yes, there is Pain, mountains of it, great pain in this joyless world. More than that. There is Death also. Is Death too painful? Who or what is it that really dies? Fifteen years of hard thinking did not take me far! The Riddle of Pain and the Mystery of Death remained ever so elusive. No doubt, philosophy and meditations did afford me shiploads of solace, but individual or personal solace was of no avail. What about the helpless mankind? Will it eternally remain sunk in pain and death? No, something must be done and quickly that. Death must be discovered, caught hold of by its neck and dragged out of its hiding place. This was the trend of my mental processes during those fateful years in Malaya. Added to this. An ardent desire to tread the path of the Wise and to unlock the realms of immortality manifested itself. I could no longer discharge my duties in the hospital.

So we find that the renunciation of Dr. Kuppuswami, like the great and unparalleled renunciation of Lord Buddha and other great Masters of yore, was undoubtedly the outcome of no personal grief or loss or pain in any the least degree, unable to face which holdly and squarely he took shelter unheroically in the caves of the Himalayas as a good many of his prototypes have done and are doing still; but it was the very

natural and spontaneous consequence of his genuine and intense love, his deep and abiding sympathy and compassion for the pains and sorrows of others and, above all, his philosophical earnestness to discover a remedy for all these apparent ills, inequalities, variations and contradictions with which the creation of the Great Artist and Sculptor seemed to abound! Viewed from this angle, I am convinced that this renunciation ranks among the highest and the best types of renunciation advocated by the scriptures or known to man in all history.

I cannot resist the temptation of quoting from the Maharshi's own brilliant work, "NECESSITY FOR SANNYASA" a few highly logical and convincing passages on the need or otherwise of this Fourth Order in the fabric of human institution. Says the Maharshi: "Can you imagine a greater Karma. Kandi, a follower of Pravritti marga than the great Mandana Misra? He was the greatest votary of Karma. He argued with Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya for 18 days on the point that Sannyasa is not necessary. He wanted to establish that we can attain Mukti Or Salvation by Karma-marga and that Nivritti (renuncia. Fion) is not absolutely essential. But at last Sri Sankara defeated Mandana Misra; and he also became one of the four disciples of Sankara. When such a mighty man became Sannyasi, are you not convinced that Sannyasa is necessary?

"You are not treading the path of Vedas as Mandana Misra did. He was an ideal householder, who knew the four Vedas, who was devoted to his elders, who walked in the footsteps of ideal Grihasthas like Yajnavalkya and others. Even he took Sannyasa!

"What are you doing? In the name of duty, you ars leading a servile life, cheating others during the twenty-four hours of the day. Your days too are short. You want 30 hours in the day so that you may earn money by unnatural means, lead a wreckless life addicted to wine, woman, cinema, liquor, etc. Do you call this life? O atheists! You want to fill your pocket and stomach and that of your relations! You want to move about in cars, eat in hotels, attend cinemas and nautch-parties !.....

"It is only the ignorant and the faithless, who are followers of the philosophy of flesh, that carp and say, 'The Sannyasins who lead the path of renunciation or Nivritti marga are idlers. They are of no use to the society... They simply waste their time in forests, caves and hills... There is no need for the order of Sannyasa. Where is Brahman? Can you show your Brahman?... Brahman is only an imaginary phan tom of the so-called Vedantins. There is no use in renunciation, Tapas and control of the senses Let us eat, drink and rejoice in this world...'

"This is a beautiful and soul-stirring philosophy indeed! This is the sublime philosophy of the Charvakas, materialists, Eupicureans, glutton fol. Lowers of Virochana and worshippers of flesh, skin, this body! The followers of this school are countless in this world... No, this is not the end of life This is not the ideal to be achieved! Renunciation of earthly connections is an absolute necessity.

"Every religion has a band of anchorites who lead the life of seclusion and meditation. There are Bhikkus in Buddhism, Fakirs in Mohammedanism, Sufistic Fakirs in Sufism, Fathers and Reverends in Christianity! The glory of a religion will be absolutely lost if you remove the hermits or Sannyasins or those who lead the life of renunciation and divine contemplation. It is these people who maintain and preserve the religions of the world (Italics are mine) It is these people who give solace to the householders when they are in trouble and distress. They are the Łarbingere of divine wisdom and peace... They bring hope to the hopeless, joy to the depressed, strength to the weak, and courage to the timid by imparting the knowledge of Vedanta....

"A real Sannyasi is the only mighty potentate of this earth. He never takes anything. He always Qiven. It was Sannyasins only who did glorious sublime work in the past. It is Sannyasins only who the persent and

in the future alan. Sankara's name can never be obliterated so can work wonders long as the world lasts. It was Ramakrishna Parama. Hamsa Rama Tirtha, Dayananda, and Vivekananda who disseminated the sublime teachings of the scriptures and preserved the Hindu Religion Sannyasi alone can do real Lokasangraha, because he has divine knowledge, he is a whole-timed man! One real Sannyasi can change the destiny of the whole world! It is one mighty Sankara who established the doctrine of Kevala-Advaita philosophy. He still lives in our hearts. A

"Just as there are research scholars or post-graduates in science, psychology, biology, philosophy, so also there should be post-graduate Yogins and Sannyasins who will devote their time in study and meditation, in research of Atma These post-graduate Yogins will give to the world their experiences and realizations in the field of religion. They will train students and send them into the world for preaching. It is the duty of householders, Zamindars, Rajas and Maharajas to look after the wants of these Sannyasins. In turn these Sannyasins will take care of their souls. Thus the wheel of the world will revolve smoothly... There will be peace in the land.

"O men of the world! Realize the necessity for such a high step, the glorious life of Sannyasa for Realization!"

I am also reminded of the immortal lines of the Narayanopanishad: "Not by works, not by progeny, not by riches, but by renunciation alone one can attain Immortality."

To come back to Dr. Kuppuswami at Madras: Leaving Madras the fiery doctor visited Poona, the sacred cities of Nasik and Pandharpur, stayed with a Yogi for a while in the Vindhya mountains and arrived at a village named Dhalaj on the banks of the Chandrabhaga river. The enchanting natural scenery and surroundings charmed him, for his mind seemed to feel peculiar vibrations of harmony and peace that elevated his soul to sublime heights. He was rocked to contemplation and then into deep trances many times in a day and would have decided to remain permanently here had it not been for certain practical difficulties that arose.

As he sat wrapped in meditation unmindful of his hunger and fatique, his face radiating a glow and a joy that seemed above the ordinary, a pious elderly. Looking gentleman quietly approached him from behind. He was the postmaster of Dixel, Sri M. R. Datta. Noticing the young meditator from head to fcot, limb by limb, he became convinced of his high birth and breeding, and extended a generous invitation for the night's supper. Supper over, the two engaged themselves in talks of God and His glories for some hours before they retired to bed.

The two new friends became drawn close to each other, so much so that the doctor was obliged to stay in his house for about five months-five happy and joyful months spent mostly in solitude and trances on the banks of the river. I think the post. Master must have found in his noble quest a worthy companion and doubtless a promising saint.

When Dr. Kuppuswami expressed his heart's desire to settle down in some quiet corner of the world for purposes of more austere and intenser spiritual meditations, the good host not only sugges ted Rishikesh but also generously compelled him to accept Rs 25 for the railway journey.

He reached the ancient city of Kashi misnamed Benares by some uncharitable representative of the British regime, had a dip into the sin-washing waters of the Holy Ganga whose aggressiveness and ferocity transform into an unmoving motionless state of perfect calm and quiet as though in reverential obeisance and homage to the city's Lord and Ruler, Viswanath! Wending his way through narrow and circuitous lanes to the temple of Lord Viswanath, more ancient than ancient itself, with a pure heart and a

still mind, he cast an eager and longing look at the Lingam, eyes fixed and steady, mind waveless and unruffled, senses dead or actionless, as it were! It is impossible to portray in finite words the infinite thrill that swayed his whole being that blessed hour! Coming out of the trance, prostrating himself humbly before the Lord of lords, the God of gods and dedi cating his body, mind and all at His Feet once and for ever, feeling light as a bird that flies high, high up in the topmost regions of the sky, Dr. Kuppuswami entrained for Rishikesh and arrived here, we are told, in May 1924

So at last the Emancipation is attained! For does not Bertrand Russel in his inimitable work, “The Free Man’s Worship” has the boldness and conviction to declare: “To abandon the struggle for private happiness, to expel all eagerness of temporary desire, to burn with passion for eternal things this is EMANCIPATION, and this is the free man’s worship!”

CHAPTER V

THE SADHANAS OF SAGE SIVANANDA -YOGA OF SYNTHESIS-

"Close all the doors of the senses and kindle within the torch of wisdom. Luminous as a long, unbroken trail of light, there gleams upon your vision a path to the hidden temple of our Lord, the bolts and bara of whose gates yield only to the magic touch of love "

-Thirumazisai Alwar

The town of Rishikesh situated at the entrance to the eternal Himalayas and entwined by the never. Failing waters of the river Ganga, is 3,500 feet above sea-level and 21 miles away by rail from the historical city of Haridwar rightly termed "the Jerusalem of the Hindus"

It serves as the important junction to all pilgrima bound for Badrinath, Kedarnath, Uttarakasi, Gangotri and Jumnotri-all very sacred places of pilgrimage to devout Hindus and lying in the very heart of the Himalayas. Pilgrims avail of both the rail and the road, as both provide adequate and convenient means of transport at almost all hours of the day.

In all my wanderings and excursions through the length and breadth of this wonderful land, Bharat, I have ecarcely come across a holier, a better and a more congenial place for a life of seclusion, and contemplation than this immortal Rishikesh. This is by no means a vorbiage. From immemorial times, nay, from the Vedic Age up to the present time, it has, without a word and without a groan, hospitably welcomed, fed clothed, comforted, sheltered and elevated thousands and thousands of weary souls some of whom subsequently blossomed forth into the sweetest flowers of spirituality the world has known and who had gone forth back into the work-a-dayworld like tornadoes, as it were, to preach, to pour forth, to inspire, and to awaken the dormant inmost faculties of mankind to the exalted states of Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute.

The greatest known Rishis like Narada, Vasishtha, Viswamitra, Yajnavalkya, Vyasa and others, not to mention the great later Acharyas like Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhwa, Vallabha and other lesser luminaries have spent some portion of their lives in or around the blessed vicinity of Rishikesh in seclusion, sublimest thoughts, meditation and absorption; for, the whole atmosphere is filled with their thought-vibrations and thought currents always ready to uplift and back up the neophytes in the path of Yoga. All worldly thoughts, thoughts of wife, children, money, immorality, vice and corruption of every kind take to their heels the moment the aspirant sets foot on its soil and breathes its fresh invigorating air. Often in my fanciful moods the thought used to occur in my mind that the Way to Heaven lies this way, through the narrow portals of Rishikesh, for, is not this place Heaven itself to those who in the biblical phraseology "hunger and thirst after righteousness?"

One fine morning, a memorable morning indeed at least to the Maharshi's disciples in the middle of 1924 or thereabout, when the Maharahi-to-be was standing all alone on the banks of the river engaged in the heaven-bestowing exercise of harmonizing the ele. Ments of his bodily constitution with the unceasing reverberations of the roaring stream, the calm celes. Tial serenity of snowy peaks around, the cool vitalizing breeze gently lulling him to a state of self-forgetfulness and the etheric thought-vibrations of innumerable saints and sages of the past enveloping him. As it were, on all sides, an event of extra. Ordinary significance in his life happened. Lord Viswanath, the presiding Deity of the holy Kashi, to

whom the noble hero of this narrative had paid his obeisance and homage but the other day at His Kashi Shrine, awoke, as it were, from His sleepless sleep, assumed the form of a grey-haired, deep-eyed, serenelooking Sannyasi, an embodiment of wisdom and knowledge, and appeared before the young Maharshi under the name of His Holiness Sri Swami Viswanandaji Maharaj.

To my mind it seems that this event alone constitutes a clear and crass manifestation of God's unbounded mercy to the Maharshi in a tangible, unmistakable physical shape. Needless it is to mention that this incidentally signifies also His generous and willing acceptance of the Maharshi's unreserved self-surrender!

Irresistibly drawn towards the all-powerful magnet the Maharshi was, the stranger approached him, qazed upon him and saw in him to his illimitable joy an already liberated Mahatma, an expert in Samadhi and a Master Yogi, the like of whom, I dare say, humanity may not see in actual flesh and blood at Jeast in a hundred years to come.

Breaking the ice of silence, the venerable sage said, "You are born for shaking the world with your distinct message and mission. Oh, how I wish I could initiate souls like you into Sannyasa and the great mysteries of the Supreme Abode (Kaivalya)! But where to get from is the problem!"

These words, uttered after the greatest deliberation and conveying the deepest import shook Dr. Kuppuswami mildly and went straight to his heart with piercing effect; for the sage not only gave a glimpse of the doctor's future but had correctly

Read his thoughts. "That's enough," thought the vigilant doctor; "he must surely be a ripe Yogi." Without delay he fell prostrate at the feet of the sage and willingly placed himself at his disposal for initiation into the Order of Sannyasa.

So it came about that on the next day our Maharshi had the rare blessedness and fortune of being hunted after by a great Guru in the real sense of the word and ordained into Sannyasa of the Church of Adi Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya of the Sringeri Mutt, and christened as Swami Sivananda Saraswati quite appropriately.

Initiation over, the all-compassionate old sage, my venerable Guru's Guru, disappeared, never to be seen again or heard ofl

Oh, how I wish he now graces the Sivanandashram with his most august presence, and gives us all but a single chance to feast our eyes on his slender elevating liqure, to shampoo his legs with our own hande, to serve him in a variety of ways to the satis. Faction of the Maharshi himself. What joy and delight will the old sage not experience, when he casts his nomnambulistic glance at the monumental works accomplished with an elephant's zeal by his matchless and incomparable disciple, who has literally fulfilled the prophecy of his Guru in so short a time and with such thundering results in his own inimitable manner, nay, who has, in my humble but honest opinion, transcended lar, far above the spiritual realme or planes, unexplored or undreamt of heretofore by even the greatest sages of yore!

So in the middle of 1924 for the first time in his life on this earthly sojourn the fair-complexioned Swami Sivananda Saraswati whom we shall hereafter refer to as the Maharshi seemed to all eyes like a block of burnished gold set amidst a blazing furnace, for his new orange-coloured robes resembled a veritable mass of fire only. And fire he still is!

Here begins the really glorious chapter of the Mabarshi's life. He lost no time in plunging himseli heart and soul into a career of seclusion and silence so strongly advocated by our scriptures and submitting

himself to the severest discipline possible by undergoing a course of hard Tapas (austerities) in a lonely hut in Swargashram situated about 2 miles from Rishikesh on the banks of the river Ganga. I need none to convince me that the wealth of Tapas and meditations standing to the credit of my master in the eternal bank of Brahman will amount to quite a dignified sum indeed that will command the respect, admiration and attention of the choicest and best of his contemporaries in the spiritual field and, what is more, will justifiably entitle him to the appellation and epithet of "MAHARSHI" without a peer in the world of today!

Although there are, no doubt, nearly a hundred biographies on the life of the Maharshi besides an autobiography from his own pen, am afraid, none of these does full justice to the various disciplines and Sadhanas actually undergone by him after his arrival in Rishikesh. Hence I propose to set below in a systematic manner all the various details appertaining to this aspect of the Maharshi's life, as I believe that is what will really interest the admirer of the master as well as those who come to hear of him for the first time through these pages.

For purposes of clarity I may divide his entire life from the time of his arrival in Rishikesh until the hour of his realization into three distinct heads, viz., (1) His ethical discipline and perfection, (2) his moral and spiritual ideals, and (3) his Sadhanas or practices to achieve his goal.

Swami Sivananda saw that God-realization will prove a mere wild goose chace affair unless he possessed in a remarkable degree those moral excellences and qualities that bestowed perfection upon the sages of yore. He realized that not only should he become the repository and storehouse of all divine virtues and qualities but that he should ruthlessly eradicate the last tinge of their opposite qualities or evils from his psychic being. This is no doubt a long, tedious and unending process, but fired by the glorious prospects of Divine Life and Divine Splendour he marched ahead undeterred and undaunted.

He practised such positive virtues as charity, celibacy, truthfulness, patience, perseverance, adaptability, non-injuring, self-reliance, self-confidence, all-encompassing Divine Love that knows no barriers, compassion, silence, renunciation, contentment, meekness, righteousness, purity of heart, endurance, humility, faith, equanimity, and control of the mind and the senses-all bestowers of Superconscious State induced by waves or clouds of righteousness so beautifully referred to in the Bhagavad Gita. These are no mere words, dear readers, but words, actually practised and lived up to every moment of the Maharshi's life as a Sannyasi extending over a period of 26 long years and "still growing strong" like the proverbial Johnie Walker!

His method of imbibing virtues into his being is unique and very practical indeed. He used to take one virtue, say, charity first. He would write the word CHARITY in bold block letters in a beautiful hand on a cardboard and nail it to the wall in front of him. For days and days, may be months even sometimes, he used to fix his gaze and attention on this word-picture, then mentally visualize it, feel intensely from head to foot its glory and magnanimity, then think of the great givers of the world like Karna and Harischandra, Nuffield and Rockfeller, and ardently wish with all his being to become one like them in giving. He used to mentally imagine unceasingly that he is immersed in an abstract ocean of charity, charity above charity below, charity to his right and to the left, charity in the ether of his heart, charity in the fine matter of his mental substance and brain, and at the nine gates of his body-city. Thus he would remain merged or absorbed, as it were, in the all elevating idea of charity, the giver of highest know. Ledge and greatest bliss, the dispeller of all unfavourable elements otherwise called ignorance, floating as it were, within the ethnic space or his subtle or desire-personality, the real underlying cause of man's eternal bondage!

Not content with theory he would immediately rush out of his hut, run to the huts of some sick or diseased saint or monk with panting breath, shampoo his legs, serve him solicitously with intense feelings of

charity and love, feed him with milk, tea, fruits, etc., give him a hot bath if necessary, wash his clothes in the river, give him his own clothes, and then feel the vibrations of charity, peace and joy actually sweeping him away into exalted heights of indescribable felicity. During such ministrations he would spare neither pains nor money but would like one mad or intoxicated spend away all that he possessed in order to restore the patient to normal state of health. That was his method or technique of developing divine virtues which this great incomparable spiritual giant possesses even at this moment as has been seen and actually testified to by one and all, from the President of India the Supreme head of the state down to the common man in the street. So, my dear readers, Maharshi Sivananda is not like some legendary figure whom nobody has seen or known, but is one who is actually living today amidst you all, if only you have the eyes to see him! He is verily the one peerless prophet who is being honoured in his own lifetime by all his countrymen and who gives the lie to the unreliable saying that "a prophet is not honoured by his own country and during his own lifetime." If you have not seen a Jesus or a Buddha or a Plato what does it matter; come, come ye, one and all; look at him; observe him; study him with a critical eye, if you please, and then take me to task, if I have painted a false or unreliable picture. A plaque on me if I have done any such thing at all.

Similarly he would take up one virtue after another, and incessantly practise them laboriously and patiently, until he was convinced that he possessed them in a super-abundant measure. Of course, one requires the energy and the patience of the proverbial crow that in a moment of high inspiration undertook the stupendous task of emptying the contents of the seven seas drop by drop merely through the instru. Mentality of its slender beak! But, unlike the crow, the Maharshi was overwhelmingly successful in his endeavours at moral purification and exaltation, for he had set his heart unwaveringly on such an ideal from which there was no turning back! He felt and experienced at every stage of his long practices that he was improving, was becoming better and better, day by day, and in every way. That was the beauty underlying all his practices. He never entertained feelings of depression or pessimism at any stage of his Yoga Sadhana; but, on the contrary, was intensely feeling the invisible Hand of the Supreme quiding him along the right path and placing all his faith implicitly at His disposal.

He would move heaven and earth and strain every nerve of his to rid himself, wherever necessary, of the opposite quality of a virtue he was trying to imbibe. Whenever he suspected in the course of his self-analysis and self examination that somewhere in the dark recesses of his inner being a particular negative quality was lurking in some potential form waiting for the opportune moment to manifest itself in a tangible shape by raising its hood, he would subject himself to the most ruthless forms of self-punishment like fasting, long vigils at night, doing Japa (ceaseless repetition of the Name of God in a prescribed manner which is conducive to the attainment of purity of mind), standing hip-deep in the icy cold waters of the Ganga in the winter, giving up salt and sugar for months at a stretch, prayers and singing of God's glories with the right mental attitude and feelings. He would often implore and entreat God to come immediately to his rescue as otherwise he would be facing the grim prospect of tumbling down into the abysmal depths of eternal perdition I would, in this connection, invite the attention of the readers to some of his highly inspiring and deeply devotional hymns addressed to various gods such as Siva, Hari, Rama, Krishna, Shakti and Saraswati-different only in conception but ONE only in reality. These hymns, so sweet, so thrilling, so elevating and so full of love and faith, have become today vary popular amongst the devotees of God, particularly in Upper India like the Punjab, the United Provinces and Bihar. I am tempted to quote below one of those hymns with a view to enable the reader to view this personality against the proper background or setting:

Come come come come, O dear Lord, Save us, save us from Mrityu Samsar.

Art Thou not ocean of mercy and love?

Hath Thou not saved Dhruva, Prahlad ?

Art Thou not shining in the chambers of our hearts?

Art Thou not glittering in our sparkling eyes?

Art Thou not beaming in our glowing faces?

Art Thou not throbbing in the beats of our hearts?

Art Thou not flowing along the breath in the nose?

Art Thou not Sakshi of our wandering minds? Now, then, O Lord! Fill my heart with Prem,

Prem, Prem! (Come.....)

Am I not singing Thy Name, Ram Ram Ram? Am I not chanting Thy Name, Om Om Om?

Am I not working, breathing and living for Thee every second of my life?

Am I not feeling Thy Presence everywhere? In trees and flowers, stones and chairs? In birds and dogs, in sun, moon and stars ? Now, then, O Lord? Fill my heart with Prem,

Prem, Prem! (Come.....)

I have seen with my own eyes and verified personally a number of old moth-eaten notebooks and manuscripts used by the Maharshi during the fiery ordeals of his Sadhana days containing records of all these and several other facts and figures.

Self-analysis was one of his most potent methods of self-correctio correction. In a separate notebook he would carefully note down after considerable self-observation all his ethical or moral weaknesses mercilessly and honestly. For instance, suppose he detected that he was the victim of outbursts of anger. He would note down under the main page entitled ANGER how many times in a day or within a speci fied period of time the wave of anger was manifesting itself in him. He would go on recording these occurrences for years and years, while simultaneously he would be dealing deadly blows to the negative quality then and there!

He would avoid things conducive to extravagance or luxury. He always lived a hard poor man's life for at least the first 12 years of his Sadhana, i.e.. from 1924 to 1936 until the establishment of the now famous Divine Life Society about which the reader will hear more in a separate chapter. He never used an umbrella or walking stick in those days. He had nothing but downright contempt for "walking sticks", for he believed these to be the enemies of youth, health and vigour. He was against the wearing of shoes also, though of course he himself could not entirely avoid this. The room in which he lived was practically empty except for a small earthen water-pot, a few clothes and books and a blanket.

He never wasted time. His maxim has always been "intense activity without break and with the right mental attitude produces Sattva or purity." He spiritualized every minute and every act. He was scrupulously punctual in all that he did. He never missed the train or the bus. He never liked the word "tomorrow" and ruthlessly exiled it from his dictionary. He always lived in the "living present." He would often remind fellow-aspirants that procrastination is the thief of time. He looked upon all with equal vision, seeing the one indwelling Presence everywhere, at all times, in all things and objects. He is perhaps the greatest living Brahmachari in the whole world if he is measured by his own standards of celibacy and chastity. He has transmuted all his energy into what is called spiritual energy (Ojaa Shakti)

supposed to be the sine qua non of awakening of the mythical serpent-power lying in a dormant state at the base of the spine, and which when awakened confers the eight major powers (Siddhis) upon the Yogi. Often he would stress on our minds : NO BRAHMACHARYA, NO BRAHMAN meaning thereby that if you do not observe the vow of celibacy you cannot dream of God-realization.

So much about the Maharshi's efforts to get to the very peaks of moral exaltation which, according to Buddha, is the sole final goal of life to be striven for, but which, I am convinced, recedes like the proverbial shy maid in concentric waves in an elusive effort, as it were, to get away from the clutches of the aspirant. Not that I mean in any sense that moral perfection is a mere utopian dream but that the higher the moralist ascends the peak the farther the destination appears to be, though, of course, the joy, the satisfaction and the feelings of blessedness he experiences swell in oceanic proportions, especially in the advanced stages of the quest. So we see the Maharshi even after his spiritual realization still joyfully labouring to soar into yet higher realms of morality, as is clearly evidenced by his daily divinized activities embracing an ever-refreshing variety of fields of service; but nevertheless, I must admit, he is one of the most conservative and perhaps the toughest among the high-ranking moralists of the century.

What, then are the Maharshi's moral and spiritual ideals? I must straightaway tell you he is the last word on the subject-an uncompromising optimist that he is. He cannot reconcile himself to a halfhearted or modified version of morality and spiritua-lity. He aims at outclassing and outdistancing Buddha and Christ, Vyasa and Suka, Yajnavalkya and Sankaracharya, and strives very hard in that direction. He is steady and unfaltering while aiming at his stars, and, what is most amazing, he shoots right at the heart of his target with skill and dexterity.

To quote but an instance. How did the Maharshi develop such all-embracing, all-inclusive universal love? He aimed at loving all living creatures inhabiting the known and unknown universes, including worms, insects and animals, in thought, word and deed, in the waking, dreaming and deep sleep states of consciousness, fully convinced of the truth that the entire world of creation is the Cosmic Body of One Supreme Being and that the apparently different names and forms are but the different limbs or parts of One Indivisible Whole that is none other than his own Self. Can a man think of chopping of his own finger or plucking away his own eye or administering a blow on his own head with a heavy club? Unthinkable, isn't it? So, if one does anything contrary to certain big immutable laws, it is in a moment of frenzy or darkness or ignorance. The moment this frenzy or darkness is dispelled, he begins to look in the right perspective and naturally repents for his folly. Hence it was that the Maharshi always aimed at loving that man particularly more intensely who had hurt or injured him, reviled him, hurled insinuations and innuendoes at him, who wanted to stab him in the back or take away his very life.

Says the Sage, "If you love your brother or sister or friend or some other dear one, everyone else is also doing the same but if you can train yourself to love your enemy and your opponent and bestow on him all the high favours you would otherwise do on your dear ones, then verily your love becomes superior to that of other common worldly people and by virtue of that consideration alone you merit the attention of the Supreme Being. In other words, you undoubtedly become a candidate for immortality." Such were his dreamy ideals of divine love in the days of his Sadhana! He is never tired of harping upon this supreme ideal in all his speeches and writings.

"If you truly see God in your enemy," asks the Maharshi, "how can you possibly hate him or hurt him? And if you really love God as you profess, how can you fail to see the all-pervading God in your isenemy also?" It becomes clear as crystal that this difficult practice of feeling the Presence of God did Brother Lawrence and Professor as William James in all beings, in all conditions or circumstances of life and

Everywhere has enabled him to seat himself unshakably on the supreme throne of Universal Love, one of his dearest and most highly cherished of ideals.

I now recollect rather vividly an instance wherein a certainX known for his notorious trade of spreading calumny against the interests of the Maharahi's religious and spiritual activities pretended to be the incarnation of virtue and goodness while standing before the august presence of the Maharshi, Although the Sage had been forewarned by one of his pupils about the character of the "wolf in sheep's clothing" and of his capacity for evil genius, the Maharshi, like one truly inspired, touched the visitor's feet, greeted him with utmost cordiality, entertained him to a sumptuous feast and bestowed on him several rupees worth of books and other rich presents, so much so that the soul that came with the sinister motive of picking holes for further propa. Ganda stood transfigured, as it were, before the Sage and, with tears trickling down his cheeks and surg. Ing emotions welling up within his breast, touched the feet of the Master as though to beg for forgiveness for all his past follies and silently walked away a sadder but definitely a wiser man! He was later noticed to have totally mended (his old ways and become quite a changed being-wiser, purer and nobler than ever he had been before!

Sage Sivananda stands for an unadulterated virtuous life of ethical purity. His recipe for the conquest of the sex-impulse strikes a note of originality and effectiveness. "When you see a woman, feel you are seeing a venomous cobra. Think she is nothing more than a leather-bag of stools, urine and all conceivable filth of which every human body is composed. Such a picture will miraculously induce disgust and fear in your mind. This is the first stage of the battle. Then in the second stage, develop Matri Bhav, to look upon her as verily your own mother. This will produce in you feelings of veneration and purity. In the third stage, feel she is a manifestation of Durga, the Goddess of Power, by whose grace aldne you can dream of acquiring spiritual perfection, power, virtue and wisdom. In the last stage, you should develop the highest Atma Bhav, the feeling that one Atma or Soul alone exista, pervades and percolates the entire universe and that names and forms, beauty and ugliness are all illusory. Give up the first three attitudes gradually and drink the nectar of Atma Bhav alone." Such teachings of the great Master are sometimes misconstrued by the unintelligent and the superficial hearer. None can excel the Maharshi in the esteem and respect in which he holds Eve. "Hate lust but not woman", clarifies the Sage elsewhere.

The Maharshi stands for the harmonious development of man. Man should aim at all-round perfection -a perfect physical body, a sound mind, a piercing intellect and highest spiritual realization in which BRAHMAN alone is the Goal. He agrees that the spiritual path is narrower than the edge of a sharp razor and vehemently advocates the necessity of a fully illumined Spiritual Preceptor to all earnest aspirants. He has practised and preached consistently a life without an iota of worry, in which all the available energies of man are pooled together and directed towards the grand achievement of the object that is so dear to him. He is an inveterate doer and preacher of disinterested selfless worka for the promotion of the welfare of humanity and the commonweal of all. He stands for a life of truthfulness in thought, word and deed even at the risk of life, if need be, for have you not heard "Truthfulness is immortal speech"? He himself is an object-lesson in iipurity, poise and power. Wrote Hin Holiness Sri Swami Tapovanji Maharaj, another illumined sage of realization and experince and a living contemporary of the Maharshi quite recently, "I do not know words. And I think there is no word in the dictionary to praise the sincerity and greatness of Your Holiness' love and modesty. No sage or saint of such love and modesty can be seen in the Puranas. (Italics are mine). We are proud of you." On another occasion the same sage wrote, "I think your love is superhuman and therefore divine."

Yogi Satyarka of Pondicherry hails Maharshi Sivananda as "the Ideal Saint," the Latvian Yogi M. Harry Dikman styles him "the World Teacher," an ex-Mayor of the Karachi Corporation looks upon him as "an

Apostle of Light and Truth," Dr. B.L. Atreya, head of the department of philosophy in the Benares Hindu University sees in him "our Rejuvenator of Hinduism," a Cabinet Minister of the central government at New Delhi greets him as "the Versatile Genius," a retired superintendent of Bihar Provincial Police has gone to the extent of writing a book on the Maharshi's life and works entitled "Siva, the Prophet of the New Age," and last but not the least, a retired Indian Judge, himself an erudite scholar of considerable distinction observes in his equally admirable treatise entitled "The Gospel of Swami Sivananda" as follows: "What Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa realized and taught has been equally, clearly and fully realized and taught by Swami Sivananda. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa found no difficulty in realizing God as Kaali and Parabrahman. He found no difficulty in working for the spiritual welfare of the world and in losing the world in the ocean of his meditation. Swami Sivananda is the lineal spiritual descendant of Sri Krishna, Sri Sankara and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. He has no antagonism to any other system of thought in India or elsewhere. In this spacious firmament of spiritual thought all the stars, suns and moons can shine and shed glory on human life. His Adwaita is an inclusive synthesizing philosophy which describes Karma-phala-tyaga and Karma-sannyasa, which shows the inner harmony of the four Yogas, which realizes and declares the unity of Brahman and Bhagawan, which harmonizes service, love, meditation and wisdom, and which is best described as renascent, unified, dynamic Hinduism." We have other saints, but none that are his equal. No saint seems to me as famous and popular as the Sage of Rishikesh. This is no tall claim by any means. The man in the street in India will tell you that it is so. What I admire most in the Maharshi is the completeness of his life! He lacks in nothing he is no full in himself. He has accepted the challenge to live and has spoken and written out of Life itself.

How did he manage to forge himself into such a full-fledged, harmoniously developed Yogi-Philosopher and man of action? What was the technique he so successfully followed in hastening his own final Enlightenment or examine these presently. Realization? We shall

He converted his little Kutir into a veritable spiritual and Yogic laboratory and himself into a research student. He conducted a series of weary experiments ranging from his food to Brahman that was his Goal. He mastered all the Yogic Postures of which he later wrote a number of books with such authority and clarity. He stuck to a diet free from salt, oil, chillies, onions, garlic, and tamarind that form indispensable ingredients of all Indian menu in general. He lived on cow's milk, butter, curd, ghee, sweet fruits such as apples, bananas, oranges and pomegranates; green vegetables like ladies finger, cauliflower, tomatoes, spinach and brinjals; rice, wheat, dal and cream. He ruthlessly conquered his old habits and tastes like tea and coffee-drinking. Occasionally, once in a way, he would sip a few mouthfuls of these to see if his old tastes are still. Alive or completely dead. He systematized for himself a course of diet that was at once simple, non-stimulating, tissue-building and energizing conducive to the attainment of a calm and pure mind. He strove very hard to conquer sloth, indolence and sleep, so much so that we find him today sleeping at will, if and when his body required it.

He would sit for hours together on one Yogic Posture, blow out and blow in the breaths, retain the air within his large lungs for many an hour at a time, simultaneously chanting mentally the sacrad Word of Power and Light (OM) and meditating upon it both abstractly and concretely. He concentrated on the seven centres of spiritual energy located in the astral body of every human being. One by one, and with the pressure of the retained breath would exert to rouse the sleeping Kundalini or serpent-power lying at the base of the spine, which when once roused from its age-long slumber fills the Yogi's body with unspeakable energy and dynamic power, shoots up from one centre to another according to the force of the Sadhana and concentration, bestows upon the practitioner all sorts of psychic powers and finally reaches the crown of the head, and unites with her consort and lord, Mahadeva or Siva. That is the culminating point of all spiritual struggles wherein you enjoy the highest Bliss of Cosmic Consciousness

called Samadhi. The Maharshi did all these, for otherwise how could he have written such works as KUNDALINI YOGA and SCIENCE OF PRANAYAMA? These are no mere heoretical platitudes but works packed with practical realizations and experience. Sings the Sage in a moment of exaltation:

"My will is powerful, I can blow up mountains, I can stop the ocean waves, I can command Elements

I can command Nature, I am one with Cosmic Will

1 can dry up oceans like Muni Agastya. My will is pure and strong, no one can resist,

I can influence people, I always get success.

I am hale and hearty, I am always joyful,

I radiate joy and peace to million distant friends.

I can give Samadhi by simple gazing,

I can do Shakti-Sanchar by mere Sankalpa.

I am Yogi of Yogins, I am Emperor of Emperors,

I am King of all kings, Shah of all Shahs.

I can elevate aspirants by simple Master's Touch, I can work wonders by the power of Satsankalpa.

I can heal millions from a long distance, This is due to will, therefore develop will."

These songs of the Maharshi though sung in English are best in effect when the classical Indian tunes are adapted. The hearers sit spellbound in a state of hypnotic trance, as it were.

He worshipped Devi, Krishna, Rama, Siva, Hari, Narayana and OM. He did Japa of various Mantras (mystic syllables of Power) for various purposes and reasons, and obtained Mantra-siddhi, which he has many times demonstrated unconsciously or in unguarded moments. I am convinced of all these. He has got Vak-siddhi. Whatever he says or whatever word comes out of his mouth literally happens! He has nowadays become more guarded; he never says anything unnecessarily. Fifteen years ago he casually told me that a small temple dedicated to Lord Siva should spring up in the close proximity of his abode and lo and behold! There stands today on the top of the hill behind him a lovely shrine with Lord Viswanath or Siva enthroned presiding, as it were, over the destinies of the surrounding domain and over especially those of the inmates of the sage's Ashram and the day-to-day activities of the immortal Divine Life Society. A pious Maharani was waiting with tons of money to carry out the will of the Sage and she did it with great grace! On another occasion he casually told us that his Ashram should gradually develop into a residential spiritual university where Yoga, Vedanta, Psychology, Ethics and Comparative Religion and Philosophy should be taught. Today that dream is also literally fulfilled in the establishment of the now famous YogaVedanta Forest University prospering smoothly with an independent weekly journal of its own! A hundred such instances are at my fingers' tips but lack of space forbids me to enumerate all these.

He composed and sang hundreds of thrilling devotional songs and obtained the Grace of Ishwara, be He Siva, Krishna or Narayana. KoWhatever he attempted to do, he has admirably succeeded. Whosoever came to see him became his permanent devotee, admirer and student. Look at the devotional activities of his Ashram today, unparalleled and unequalled in the annals of religious history! From morning 4 O'clock till night 10 there is going on for the last 6 years unbroken and unceasing chanting of the immortal Mahamantra "Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare, Hare Krishna Hare Krishna

Krishna Krishna Hare Hare" so highly spoken of by the divine Sage Narada himself in the Narada Kalisantaranopanishad as sufficient spiritual practice for the attainment of the highest goal of life and the enjoyment of all earthly goods as well. Why, what for is all this for a sage who has renounced the world and retired into the jungles? Not for his own sake or for his own selfish interests the Maharshi has inaugurated them, but for the promotion and welfare of the entire humanity torn by wars, bloodshed, famine and other untold miseries. Will not these humble but genuine invocations to the Supreme Lord of all Creation by the purest and the noblest of souls have some effect and contribute something to ameliorate the pangs of sufferings of the helpless faithless man and woman of the world? Will not the daily worship of Lord Siva, Krishna and Ganesha at the Viswanath Shrine in the Sivanandashram in an insignificant corner of the world in India with due ceremonies and rituals performed solely in a disinterested selfless spirit, for the good, prosperity and growth and righteousness in the materialistic world of today transform the evil propensities of people into God-fearing, righteous and good-natured souls willing to accept the grand principles of Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man? It is for the achievement of such sublime objects, the Maharshi is labouring night and day with a band of unselfish workers, and maybe, the hearts of men and women the world over, of democracies and dictatorships, of Stalin, Truman, Atlee, and other leaders of great causes might come together and operate in unison in a spirit of fellowship and universality. It is with that aim in view the Maharishi extended an open invitation to the leaders and administrators of the world to visit his Yoga-Vedanta Forest University, enrol themselves as pupils, undergo a course of training and then take up their respective posts of duty: In a message entitled "THE ONLY SOLUTION FOR WORLD-PEACE" he exhorts:

"If Mr. Stalin and Mr. Truman

And Mr. Atlee take Sannyasa,

And stay in Ananda Kutir Yoga-Vedanta Forest

If all the leaders of India and the world,

All high court judges and M.A., Ph.D.,University;

All ministers and premiers of the world,

All foremost scientists and doctors,

All kinds of "Generals" and Ambassadors,

Embrace Sannyasa and stay in the above University,

And then go out as preachers and prophets

With Yogic discipline, Self-realization. Wisdom and Intuition,

We will have a new era, a new order,

Heaven on earth, Vaikuntha here.

This is the only solution for stopping wars

And establishing a lasting peace on this earthplane."

The Maharshi's Philosophy of life is called "Yoga of Synthesis." It is a harmonious and wholesome combination of Action, Emotion, Will and Wisdom called in India Karma-Bhakti-Yoga Juana all in one. It is this Yoga of Synthesis that he actually practised, Jnana or Vedanta, of course, as the substratum or

background Practice of Karma-Yoga purifies the mind by washing away the impurities, if done with true Atma Bhav of Narayana Bhav of the feeling that it is the Lord Narayana who is dwelling in the hearts of all and that you serva that Lord Narayana and Narayana alone and not Mr. X. Or Mr. Y. You must imagine how you will serve your Creator, if He were to come and stand before you and tell you who He is! That same feeling should pervade your being and inspire you, when you enter the field of service. Service done in that spirit will elevate your soul to exalted spiritual [heights and transform you into the mould of a veritable divinity, a visible God on earth. That is how the Maharshi did service and is still doing. Ministers and multimillionaires who rule the state come and wait upon him and sometimes go away unable to get an interview; while the Sage melts like butter and runs to the hut of a sick helpless villager with medicines tucked up in the pits of his arms and tears of sympathy dimming his eyes. Not that he is proud or haughty before big people, but he means no difference in his heart between high and low, rich and poor.

"Work is real worship; work is meditation" wrote the Maharshi. "Serve everyone with Atma Bhav, without the idea of agency (the feeling that I am doing such and such work), and without expectation of fruit or reward. Offer every work as an oblation unto the Lord."

The Maharshi maintained Spiritual Diary in the days of his spiritual struggles. It goaded his mind God-ward every day and reminded him of his weaknesses, shortcomings and failures. It played the part of his absent Guru, and developed his powers of reflection. Mahatma Gandhi and Benjamin Franklin are the only other persons who are known to have kept such diaries. It taught him the value of time and regulated all his actions. See the model on the next page: If you maintain such a diary you will undoubted ly become in course of time a very great man, full of sterling qualities of head and heart, a moral and spiritual hero. It would become almost impossible for anybody to find any defect or fault in you. The Maharshi calculated the number of hours spent for each item in a particular month with those of the previous month with a view to strike the balance sheet. He was not ashamed of noting down his own defects in the diary, because he did it for his own self-advancement and not for exhibition in a museum or advertisement. He compared his day-to-day progress in his Yogic Sadhana with that of the previous week or month. These results inspired him and acted as an incentive for further intense effort. Whenever a novice comes up to him to learn Yoga, this is what he first advocates to him. No other saint or sage in India is known to have done this up to this time. That was how he himself regulated his spiritual life and with such clear and convincing results.

THE SPIRITUAL DIARY

Questions

1 How many hours did you sleep?

2 When did you get up from bed?

3 How many Malas of Japa?

4 How long in Nama Smaran or Kirtan ?

5 How many Pranayamas?

6 How long did you perform Asans?

7 How long did you meditate in One Asana ?

8 Were you regular in your Meditation?

9 How many Gita Slokas did you read or get by heart?

10 How long in company of the Wise (Satsanga) ?

11 How many hours did you Observe Mouna?

12 How long in disinterested Selfless service?

13 How much did you give in charity?

14 How many Mantras did you write?

15 How long did you practise Physical exercise?

16 How many lies did you tell and with what self-punishment?

17 How many times and how long of anger and with what self-Punishment?

18 How many hours did you spend in useless company? How many times did you fail in

19 Brahmacharya ?

20 How long in study of religious Books?

21 How many times did you fail in the control of evil habits and with what self-punishment?

22 How long did you concentrate on your Ishta Devata (Saguna or Nirguna Dhyana)?

23 What virtues are you developing?

24 What evil quality are you trying to eradicate ?

25 Which Indriya is troubling you Much?

26 How many days did you observe fast and vigil ?

27 When did you go to bed?

Name....

Address...

Month.

Signature

He spent daily considerable time in the company of Yogins whom he considered more developed or advanced than himself and drew inspiration and enthusiasm from them. He continued his reading habits that he had formed in the days of his prerenunciation at Trichinopoly and Singapore. He read with diligence, attention and avidity. He took copious notes of all that he perused. He then reflected upon these notes and formed his own reasoned judgment. But he read only such subjects that came within the purview of the domain he had chosen and eschewed others foreign or irrelevant to it.

Having attained the full benefits of worshipping God with form he took to Vedantic Sadhana and contemplation. He meditated on the four great sayings of the Upanishads “Aham Brahma A mi”, “Tat

Twam Asi", "Ayam Atma Brahma", and "PrajnanamBrahma" and their esoteric significance. He meditated on "Sivoham" (I am Siva), "Soham" (That I am), "Satchidanandaswaroopoham", "Akarta Abhokta Asanga Sakshee Aham" (I am non-doer, non-enjoyer, unattached silent Witness), "Yasmin sarvaani bhutaani" (in whom all beings reside), "Duhkhameva sarvam vivekinah" (all this is indeed sorrow to a man of discrimination), "All Light I am Om Om Om," "All Joy I am Om Om Om," "All Power I am Om Om Om", "Satyam Jnanam Anantam", I am Om Om Om", (I am Truth, Wisdom and Eternal), the verses dealing with Vedanta in the 18th chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita, the verses of the Mandukyopanishad and so forth. For several days he used to remain indoors absorbed or buried, as it were, in contemplation on such and other great truths propounded in the innumerable verses of the ten classical Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras. He used to forget food and drink or answering Calla of nature even. I have no doubt that he has fully tasted the priceless bliss of Nirvikalpa Samadhi on such occasions.

His favourite song as a Vedantic practitioner was the Song of Chidanand in Sanskrit and English combined. Here it is:-

Chidanand Chidanand Chidananda hun

Har halme almasta Satchidananda hun

Nijanand Chidanand Nijananda hun

Har halme almasta Satchidananda hun.

Sivanand Sivanand Sivananda hun

Aghadbhumwala Aghadbhumavala Akhilananda hun.

Ajaranand Amaranand Achalananda hun

Har halma almasta Satchidananda hun.

Nirbhaya aur nischinta Satchidananda hun

Kaivalya kevala kutastha ananda hun,

Nitya suddha siddha Satchidananda hun.

(Chidanand.....)

Knowledge Bliss, Knowledge Bliss Bliss Absolute,

In all conditions I am Knowledge Bliss Absolute.

I am without old age, without death, without renk motion,

In all conditions I am Knowledge Bliss Absolute.

I am without fear, without worry, Bliss Absolute,

Knowledge Absolute; Existence Absolute,

Independent, unchanging, Non-dual Atma,

Adwaita Atma, Immortal Atma. Eternal, pure, perfect Knowledge, Bliss Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Existence Absolute. (Chid...

Readers genuinely interested in hearing the melodious and thrilling way in which the Maharshi himself sings in his own inimitable fashion these and other tunes should procure the gramophone records and entertain themselves to a rich feast of Indian music of which the singer is himself no mean exponent. I have no doubt these records are capable of transportings the hearers to regions of eternal bliss and unalloyed felicity.

In his autobiography entitled "SIVA GITA" distinguished alike for its originality and conciseness, the Maharshi has accomplished almost an herculean task in narrating the story of his life in 18 short letters. Writes he, "My daily routine is like that of Lord Buddha. I always remain in the room. I do Japa, Kirtan, and Meditation. I study sacred works. I write. I come out of the room for work, service and interview. I talk a little. I think much. I meditate much. I try to do much and serve much. I do not waste even a single minute. Lever keep myself fully occupied. I lead a well-regulated life. I perform worship of Atma at all times. I work for the good of others." (Italics are mine).

The reader would have observed that the Maharshi did not follow exclusively either Bhakti, Yoga or Jnana but a synthesis of all these. He advocates the Path of Action for the removal of the impurities of the mind, the path of Love or Bhakti for the attainment of the Grace of the Lord, the path of Yoga for the control of the senses and the mind and union with the Lord and then the Path of Wisdom or Vedanta, in which nothing else existe except Brahman. Says the Maharshi in his illuminating booklet styled 'YOGA OF SYNTHESIS', "The Yoga of Synthesis alone will bring about integral develop. Ment. The Yoga of Synthesis alone will develop the head, heart and hand, and lead to perfection. To become harmoniously balanced in all directions is the ideal of religion. This can be achieved by the practice of Yoga of Synthesis." Continues the Sage, "To behold the One Self in all beings is Jnana, wisdom; to love the Self is Bhakti, devotion; to serve the Self is Karma, action. When the JnanaYogi attains wisdom, he is endowed with devotion and selfless activity. Karma Yoga is for him a spontaneous expression of his spiritual nature, as he sees the one Self in all. When the devotee attains perfection in devotion, he is possessed of wisdom and activity. The Karma Yogi attains wisdom and devotion when his actions are wholly selfless. Thus the three paths are in fact one, in which the three different temperaments emphasize one or the other of its inseparable constituents. Yoga supplies the method by which the Self can be seen, loved and served " "Without service and love you cannot dream of attaining Advaitic realization or oneness even in crores of lives. Love is involved in service. Service is love in expression. You serve only when you love a man. Knowledge is diffused love and love is concentrated Knowledge. Karma-Yoga is always combined with Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga." Hear the final clarion voice. "Even if you are a student of Velanta you should not leave the practice of Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Raja Yoga, till you attain the highest realization, till you attain perfect conquest over Dehaadhyasa and fear." (Italics are mine). The lives of Lord Krishna, Sukadeva, Sankaracharya and Appayya Dikshitar are but random examples. The Maharshi has implicit faith in them and walks along their beaten track unwaveringly.

I am reminded of the beautiful Tamil verse of the great mystic saint of South India, Thirumazisai Alwar again

"To be unwearied in the service of the Lord that dwells in me, is the work I am born for. And what calling is nobler than this? In it I find my all."

CHAPTER VI

REALIZATION OF SIVANANDA

"The liberated sage is ever cool and calm. He lives as if he were without a body. He never loses in the least his equanimity of temper even when he is persecuted. Com. Placently he sits and complacently he sleeps. He is happy at all times and in all conditions."

-Sivananda

In 1932 finding the atmosphere of the Swarg. Ashram a trifle uncongenial for carrying on with the advanced stages of his meditations Swami Sivananda crossed over to the opposite bank of the river and occupied a dilapidated but wholly secluded tenement. His disciples, for he had by this time attracted a good many of them, christened this dwelling as Ananda Kutir or the "Abode of Bliss," which in subsequent years was destined to become the nervecentre of a universal religious, moral, spiritual and social Renaissance, the headquarters of the Divine Life Society with its numerous branches all over the world, the ideal Ashram for the students of Yoga for the performance of their Sadhanas, nay, a veritable place of pilgrimage to all dispassionate seekers of Truth!

There is an old saying current in this land that only a sage can know a saga, only a Yogi can discern a. Yogi, only a Jeevanmukta can identify a Jeevan mukta; and there is considerable force in it.

What can a poor struggling soul, that I am, say about the inner spiritual realizations or intuitive experiences of a Master Yogi and a Master-Vedanti! Neither have I similar precious gifts nor am I in any sense anything approaching the blade of straw under the feet of this Superman and Prince among Yogins who seems so unfathomable and incomprehensible, so deep and so profound, so many leagues higher up us all, so serene and tranquil, so desireless and so unattached, so different from all of us, so ethereal and so supremely divine, ever delighting in the self, ever unconcernedly sporting in the Self. All that I can do is to take shelter in the exclamations and proclamations of the Sage-words that have gushed out from the fulness and exuberance of his heart in moments of thrill and exaltation.

In a stanza entitled I am Tasting the Bliss! He declares:

"I have realized the identity

Of individual soul and Supreme Soul.

Satchidananda is my essential nature.

My mind is withdrawn from all external objects.

I am deeply God intoxicated.

All sorrow and pain and fear have vanished.

I am ever peaceful and joyful.

I am Truth, Pure Consciousness and Bliss.

I shine forth as a Divine Flame

In all living beings.

I am tasting the Bliss of the Eternal;

I have attained the Goal of Life."

In That Brahman Am I he elucidates the nature of his realization in the following lines:

"That Brahman who is Satchidananda,

Who is the Indweller and Inner Ruler,

Who is the womb of the Vedas,

Who is the creator of this universe,

Who is the substratum for everything,

Who gives light to the intellect,

Who is hiding himself in all forms,

Who is adored by the Rishis,

Whom the Vedas proclaim,

Whom the Yogins wish to attain by Samadhi,

Who is terror to Indra and Agni,

Who is sweet to the disciplined Yogi;

That Brahman verily am I;

Sivoham Sivoham Sivoham!"

In Siva's Soliloquy the Sage affirms.

"I have slain the mind With the sword of discrimination, I have found out the Atmic pearl;

I enjoy the bliss of the Eternal:

Sivoham Sivoham Sivoham."

In State of Liberation the exalted experience of a Jeevanmukta, the highest realization humanly possible for anybody is excellently portrayed in the following picturesque language:

"O what a Joy! What a Bliss!

All desires are now fulfilled,

Everything is attained,

I am Immortal, Deathless,

I am Eternal Consciousness;

I am the Great and the High.

Sivananda says:

All this is mere Moksha.

Moksha alone is everywhere.

It is to be known

And experienced by everyone."

(Italics are mine)

Here is a portrayal of Nirvikalpa Samadhi couched in the simplest and clearest words possible:

"That ego has melted now, The Vasanas are burnt up In the fire of wisdom; There is Manonasa Or annihilation of mind. There is neither 'I' nor 'you' nor 'he' There is neither 'this' nor 'that'; There is neither 'here' nor 'there'; Everything is 'here' and 'now'.

All distinctions have vanished. All differences have disappeared.

All indeed is Brahman.

There is one homogeneous bliss.

Sivananda says:

This Experience-whole is ineffable;

Language is imperfect;

Words are impotent to describe this state;

Feel it yourself in Samadhi."

Again the fulness of the realization is nowhere more conclusively illustrated than in the following

Passage:

"I know my essential nature,

I have reached the peak of perfection,

I am pure Immortal Atma;

All my desires are gratified:

I am an Apta-kama;

I have attained everything,

I have done all my works,

I have nothing more to learn;

The Vedas have nothing to teach me

The Smritis have nothing to instruct me,

The world has nothing to attract me;

Maya is hiding herself modestly,

As I know all her tricks and ways:

She blushes to appear before me.

Sivananda says:

This is all due to the Grace of the L

And the Grace of the Guru:

He made me like himself.

Prostrations to the Guru! Obeisance to the Guru!"

The land of eternal sunshine and un-hampered joy is pictured in the following lines in a stanza entitled The Goal:

"Timeless and spaceless is this goal,

Painless and sorrowless is this seat;

Blissful and peaceful is this abode,

Changeless and boundless is this Dhama"

Sings the Sage in I am He.

"I have neither body, nor mind, nor senses,

I am neither body, nor mind, nor senses,

I have neither change, nor growth, nor death,

I am the Immortal, All-pervading Brahman

"Neither virtue nor sin can touch me,

Neither pleasure nor pain can affect me. Neither likes and dislikes can taint me I am Existence-Absolute, Knowledge-Absolute, Bliss-Absolute.

"I have neither friends nor enemies,

I have neither parents nor relatives,

I have neither home nor country,

I am That I am, I am That I am.

"I am never born, I never die,

I always exist, I am everywhere,

I have neither fear of death nor fear of public

Criticism.

I am Siva, full of Bliss and Knowledge. (Chidanandarupah Sivoham Sivoham.) “I am beyond the three Gunas and the three al

Atates,

I am beyond time, space and causation, I am beyond the reach of mind and speech, I am He, I am He, I am He, I am He.

(Soham Soham Soham Soham)

“I am formless, attributeless and motionless, I am stainless, beginningless and endless, I am decayless, soundless and thoughtless, I am That, I am That, I am That.

(Soham Sivoham Sivah-kevaloham.)”

In the mystical lines of the poem It is All Thy Grace the Sage gratefully acknowledges the Lord’s Grace

“O Madhaval Kesaval By the sword of Thy Grace I have cut off all my bonds;

I am free, I am blissful,

All desires have disappeared, Now I aspire nothing But Thy blessed feet; I have lost my thoughts In Thee, O Narayana.”

Read again the following stanza named Thy Immeasurable Compassion:

“I had Thy wondrous vision.

I was lost in ecstasy.

I was at once transformed,

I was drowned In the divine consciousness, In the ocean of divine bliss. Hail, hail! O Vishnu!”

In The Temple of My Heart a mystic experience of uncommon beauty and grandeur is expressed!

“My mind melts with love; Thou hast stolen my heart;

I sing in ecstasy. Thy feet rest upon my head; I behold a splendid light; I experience a vision beatific. I see Thy charming beauty, O Honey! O Nectar! Thou art in my heart Like a diamond hill.”

(Italics are mine)

What spiritual experience or realization can be no full and complete as is woven in the poem entitled Para Pooja?

This world is Viswa Brindawan; This Hridaya is also Brindawan; I behold Thee everywhere. Thy face is turned everywhere. O Lord! Shall I wash Your feet with holy water? The very Ganges flows from Thy feet! Shall I give you a seat? Thou art All-pervading! Shall I wave lights for Thee? Sun and Moon are Thy eyes! Shall I offer flowers to Thee? Thou art the essence of flowers! Shall I offer Prasad for Thee? Thou art the essence of the food! Shall I offer cloth for Thee? The sky is thy garment! Shall I offer some gold? Thou art the husband of Lakshmi! Shall I play music for Thee? Thou art Sabda Brahman itself! Thou art Raga and Ragini; Thou art Sapta-swara; Thou art Anahat Music!”

With a penetrating intellect that will easily eclipse a Plato or Kant, Swami Sivananda concludes!

“A wave is nothing but water,

A chair is nothing but wood, A zing is nothing but gold,

A nail is nothing but iron,

A pot is nothing but clay,

A cloth is nothing but thread, A house is nothing but bricks; Even so this world (s nothing but Brahman, See the gold, ring vanishes, See the clay, pot vanishes, See the wood, chair vanishes, See the thread, cloth vanishes, Ses Brahman, the world vanishes.”

The reader will have an inkling of the state of Self-realization in the Saint’s poem Brahman Shining:

“Brahman shining

Maya hiding

Avidya veiling

Jiva weeping.

“Trishna burning

Vasana scorching

Emotions bubbling

Sankalpa swelling.

“Anahat ringing

Kundalini awakening

Nectar dribbling

Yogi drinking.

“Ascetic controlling

Thoughts subduing

Egoism vanishing

Knowledge revealing

“Sage rejoicing

Jijnasu meditating

Aspirant reflecting

Neophyte hearing.

“Bhakta singing

Devotee surrendering Tapaswi fasting Sadhak subduing.

“Adept resting Eyes glittering Wisdom flowing.”

Joy radiating

In a nakedly revealing stanza styled Pralaya the practicability of the highest realization attained by himself is brought to the door-step of any Tom, Dick or Harry who will have the goodwill to practise what he so confidently advocates !

“Dissolve the body in the earth,

Dissolve the speech in the mind,

Dissolve the mind in the Self,

Enjoy the bliss of the Eternal.

“Dissolve the tongue in the water,

Dissolve the eye in the fire,

Dissolve the ear in the ether,

Rejoice in the peace of the Absolute

“Dissolve the nose in the earth,

Dissolve the skin in the air,

Dissolve the Prana in Rajas,

Plunge into the bliss of the Infinite.

“Dissolve the water in the fire,

Dissolve the fire in the air,

Dissolve the air in the ether,

Merge in the joy of the Immortal.

“Dissolve the Viswa in Virat,

Dissolve the Tejas in Hiranyagarbha,

Dissolve the Prajna in Ishwara,

Float in the happiness of Brahman.

“Dissolve Virat in A,

Dissolve Hiranyagarbha in U,

Dissolve Ishwara in M,

Swim in the delight of Atma.”

The nature of Emancipation is delightfully painted in the poem entitled Moksha.

“Moksha is not a thing

That is achieved through something;

What is achieved cannot be eternal;

Moksha is already there.

You are ever free.

You will have to know the divinity;

You will have to become

That By removing the veil of ignorance;

You will have to destroy

The notion of separateness,

The idea of duality,

The wrong notion I am the body',

The erroneous conception 'I am the Jiva.'

Nowhere is the rich experience of Sivananda's realization of the Self more amply luminous than in his extraordinary and original work entitled Ten Upanishads. Never since the days of the Vedic Age has any saint or sage not excluding the great Sankaracharya had the courage and the resourceful. Ness to write an original Upanishad that can stand comparison with any of the best of ancient Upanishads embodying in it all the facets of Advaitio

Realization based upon personal direct knowledge of Brahman. I have not the slightest doubt that a perusal of this highly precious compendium will reward the student in a more than ample degree.

In the Anandabindu Upanishad he gives a graphic description of a Jeevanmukta (living liberated sage). "A Jeevanmukta never thinks of the past. He has no thought of the morrow. He looks with indiffe. Rence upon the present. He is beyond time and space now. He lives in Eternity now. He has conquered death."

The highest Truth realized by him is couched in the following language: "There is neither birth nor death, neither bondage nor freedom, neither Sadhana nor Samadhi, neither meditator nor meditated, neither seeker alter liberation nor liberated-this is the absolute Truth."

Here are the chief marks of a delivered soul: "The chief marks of a Jeevanmukta are knowledge of the past, present and future, absolute fearlessness, absolute desirelessness, absolute painlessness, equal vision, balanced mind, freedom from exhilaration and depression."

The blessedness of a Jeevanmukta's state is described in his Adwaitamrita Upanishad in the following words. "The Jeevanmukta loses nothing while sleeping and gains nothing while waking. He has renounced both good and evil, success and failure, victory and defeat, gain and loss."

Again in Swaroopabodha Upanishad, a mine of Vedantic knowledge, ringing with inspiration be says: "The sage in whom the clinging for sensual life and thirst for sensual enjoyment have vanished through knowledge of Swaroopa is the mighty poten. Tate of this whole world. His joy knows no bounds. He must be adored as visible Brahman on earth. Continues the Sage, "When the mind purified by constant meditation is merged in Brahman, the truth of Brahman is clearly and definitely realized by the Nirvikalpa Samadhi. This leads directly to the realization of the bliss of Brahman, the One without a second."

In Vicharabindu Upanishad the Swami declares, “The Jeevanmukta or the knower of the Self is ever peaceful in all conditions. He is absolutely desire. Less. He moves about like a child unattached to all conditions. For one who has lost all sense of ‘I’ in the body, where is attachment or non-attachment?”

What is Moksha? It has been described in the scriptures as a state of sarva duhkhaat atyanta nivrittih which means in simple words a condition devoid of all kinds of pain such as birth, death, grief, delusion, etc., and the attainment of Paramananda-prapti or the Highest Bliss. This is the state attained by the Jeevanmukta or the living liberated Sage rare to find.

It was no selfish end the Swami sought in his meditations; Hindu meditation never aims at that; it was not a soliloquy in which his soul found self-satisfaction for itself, but a dialogue between God and His dear child in which as the Voice of the Silence was heard ever more and more distinctly the surrender of the self was made ever more and more complete. The salvation of the individual soul is for the glory of the Supreme Soul and nothing short of it. Little wonder, therefore, Swami Sivananda was blessed with beatific Visions and Revelations of the Lord from time to time.

CHAPTER VII

THE PILGRIMAGES AND TOURS OF THE SAGE

"We discover in the philosophical movements of India profound truths, which form a big contrast with the meanness of results at which European genius has sometimes stopped. We are constrained to bend the knee before them and see in this cradle of human race, the native land of the highest philosophy."

-Victor Cousins

What the Christians hope to attain by going to Jerusalem, what the Mussalmans hope to attain by visiting Mecca, the same the Hindus hope to attain by going on pilgrimages to Kasi, Rameswaram, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangorti, Amaranath, Mt. Kailas, Prayag, Gaya, Dwaraka, Bhadrachallam, Pandaripur, Nasik, Tirupati, Tiruttani, Tiruvannamalai, Kalahasti, Chidambaram, Kanchi, Srirangam, Palani, Madurai, Ayodhya, Mathura, Brindavan and a host of other places too numerous to mention. With the Hindu it is an instinct to believe that a visit to some celebrated holy temple in some sacred town or city coupled with a dip in the holy waters of the celestial rivers like the Ganga, the Yamuna, the Saraswati, the Sindhu the Brahmaputra, the Narmada, the Godavari, the Krishna, the Cauvery, the Tamraparni and the Vaigai will at one stroke cleanse his soul of all its accumulated impurities and sins of crores of previous lives and confer the benedictions of eternal life and immortality. I would beseech you not to laugh within your sleeves or look down upon the Hindus as a blindly superstitious race bound down by meaninglese traditions and absurd conventions A little deeper study and analysis of these apparently meaningless practices will throw floods of light and logic and convince you of the mighty truths that lie hidden beneath their religious beliefs, faiths, conventions and traditions. The Hindu Religion with all its elaborate rituals and ceremonies accompanied by ceaseless recitations of verses and hymns is unquestionably the most scientifically-grounded religion even according to the western scholars, thinkers and philosophers.

Freidrich Schlegel, the reputed German philosopher writes: "Even the loftiest philosophy of the Europeans set forth by the Greek philosophers appears like a feeble spark, faltering and about to be extinguished against the heavenly glory of the noonday sun of Oriental Idealism." Professor Mackenzie says, "The religion that is most nearly akin to philosphical reconstruction of scientific knowledge would seem to be that of Brahmanism." And Sir John Woodroffe, another keen and enthusiastic student of Hindu Philosophy emphatically affirms that "an examination of Indian Vedantic doctrine shows that it is in conformity with the most advanced scientific and philosophical thought of the west. Where it is not so, it is Science which will have to go to the Vedantic philosophy for guidance and not the reverse." Paul Brunton, a recent writer on India and her mysticism opines that "India holds an ancient heritage of spiritual thought from its past that stands unparalleled for profundity and unmatched for width. Young Indians, therefore, should claim this birthright, finding what is worthy and applicable to the present needs. They should neither be awed by western Scepticism nor corrupted by modern materialism but go to their best thinkers for guidance."

The redeeming power of faith and its heavenly virtues have been highly extolled in all the holy scriptures of the world. Christ Jesus himself had the greatest attraction and admiration for the man of simple believing faith, and worked all his 'miracles' and 'wonders' only where it was present and failed where it was lamentably lacking.

The institution of pilgrimage is a highly popular and a most ancient one in India. Thousands upon thousands of her people are found to be always on the move for this purpose. Nowhere does the heart of India throb more vibrantly than it does in these bands of devout pilgrims going about from shrine to shrine to have a sight of their Deity. On some special occasions like the Kumbha Melas at Haridwar and Allahabad, the Car Festivals at Puri and Pandaripur, the Badrinath pilgrimage season every year between the months of May and September, millions of pilgrims from every nook and corner of the land travel in crowded railway compartments to take part in these periodical festivities or national celebrations; and the whole country is agog with Intense excitement and looks as though it was some temporary inn where men, women and children of all ages, of diverse stocks and different tonques come, rest a while, and depart, for their respective destinations. And inn this world is and pilgrims we all are!

In olden times, when facilities for transport ware meagre and inadequate and travelling implied paril to one's life and property, pilgrimages were deemed to confer the highest spiritual merit on the fortunate few. Even in these days of rank materialism and so-called civilization where man builds wall against man, nation against nation and country against country, it heartens and strengthens one to find in India people, high and low, rich and poor, going about on pilgrimages and every important domestic event such as a marriage or a death celebrated with a visit to one of the numerous places of pilgrimage for obtaining the favour of the presiding Deity enshrined therein,

Before the introduction of the railways in India. When motor cars and aeroplanes remained the exclusive monopoly of the gods, angels and their special favourites but wholly unavailable to the common man in the street, pilgrims used to go about in small parties and long distances were covered by foot. They used to get up early in the morning and start on their religious expeditions. They walked 15 or 20 miles, made a halt somewhere in a hamlet or on the banks of some cool river, cooked the midday meal, and after partaking of the same apent the afternoons in reading the holy books or singing of God's glories. They would resume their journeys at about 4 or 5 in the evenings, walk for about 2 or 3 hours and again rest in some wayside public inn for the night. They used to halt for a few days in important towns or cities reputed for sages or savants, eagerly search for them, drink deep at the fountainhead of their knowledge and draw inspiration from them.

There are life-long pilgrims in India. These are a wonderful lot. Young men of tender age, occasionally of high birth and vast learning, fired by spiritual zeal and religious fervour, inspired by deep studies of profound philosophies and the fiery exhortations of dynamic living sages abandon their comfortable homes and luxurious ways of living, wander about through hills and dales, forests and river-banks in quest of God or Truth emulating the examples of Buddha, Bhartrihari or Raja Gopichand, with not a copper coin in their pockets but depending entirely upon their Creator even for their daily bread and sustenance. Such a phenomenon is, of course unthinkable in the West. Such wanderings in course of time ripen their souls and render them fit for the hard life of asceticism and renunciation. God and Higher Living are the dominant passion with most of the enlightened Hindus and that is precisely the reason why this land is honey-combed with innumerable places of pilgrimage, and sacred temples with time-honoured spiritual institutions attached to them, dedicated to various deities by the enlightened philanthropists and righteous rulers of the land. In what other country can you find all these and the many free feeding houses offering food in a spirit of utmost religiousness to anybody for the mere asking? Such were the glories of this land before the advent of the unfortunate British rule in India.

Alas! What is the precise condition of India today? What is the net-effect of the 'civilizing influence of the British impact on India and her incomparable culture? Hotels, cinemas, cigarettes, haze. Line snow, lip-sticks, talcum powder, night clubs, horse races, white horse whisky, port wine, artificial social conventions, and a prostitution of all moral and ethical values. We have all these in abundance, of course,

thanks to the British advent. Not doubt they also gave us motor-cars, aeroplanes, radios and railways not out of pure humanitarian ideals but with a view to dig the last ounce of gold from our purse. In other words, in the name of civilization and culture, they simply robbed us of our gold and silver, of our precious stones and jewels, supplanted our matchless ancient civilization and left us in a state of unthinkable want, poverty, nakedness and emasculation. I am sorry for these unpalatable observations, but these are hard undeniable facts of history which no honest Britisher can in fairness to his conscience dispute or deny.

Life in the West is quite artificial and external. Life in India was essentially internal and based upon immemorial spiritual and moral traditions. The impact of the two cultures has had tremendously baneful results. India perforce yielded to the surging waves of the Western impact We began to vilely imitate the rulers of the land in dress food, drink, social life and in all other fields of activity. We had no other go. Such a course was inescapable. So the British completely held us under their allround sway and mercilessly powerful domination for centuries and what is more tried to kill our soul by all sorts of ingenious methods. Today people in India go on pilgrimages just for a change, pleasure or luxury-with a different mental attitude. They wishfully imagine that their sins will be washed off by a bath in the Ganga or the Yamuna. The old spiritual atmosphere that once pervaded these holy places has taken to its heels and is no more there; and in its place you find vice and immorality, corruption and what not. They are no longer holy places.

Years ago the city of Kasi was a veritable spiritual paradise indeed, full of religious fervour, purity and holiness. There were hundreds of first-class Sadhus, learned Sannyasins and enlightened Mahatmas imbued with the highest ideals and aspiration, persons of stern discipline, practitioners of Yoga and scholars in scriptural lore. The various ghats on the banks of the holy Ganges were miniature heavens on earth. Great Bhaktas, holy servants of God used to conduct Bhajans and Kirtans and religious discourses for the benefit of hundreds of enraptured audiences. There was large-scale distribution of food to the poor and the needy. Religious mendicants of firm vows there were many, and many a home filled their bowls with Puries, Chappatis, cooked rice and vegetables, milk and curd. The bare needs of Yogins and Mahatmas were easily supplied by the charitable minded. Today you can hardly find a dozen Sannyasins even if the whole city of Kasi is ransacked. The ghats are being used in the evenings by women of ill fame for immoral dances, picnic and light entertainments. Thanks to the civilizing influence of the British rule, they have become the harbingers of vice and corruption.

Righteousness and Dharma seem to have almost disappeared from the soil of India. Today people seem to have but one aim in view-viz., accumulation of money by means fair and foul, and in the immortal words of Goldsmith “where wealth accumulates, men decay.” Lust, greed, corruption and a preponderance of evil have enslaved this once glorious land. Nobody seems to care to read or hear the Bhagavad-Gita, the Ramayana and the Bhagavata, to do Japa, to sing Bhajans, to seek holy company, to respect and serve the Sannyasins, who are the pride and glory of India, the essence and embodiment of all our holy Upanishads. Devil-like, people are quoting the scriptures often to cloud other’s vision and judgment, for the gratification of their base selfish passions and lower nature. Let this clarion call echo and re-echo in all human hearts: “The holy order of Sannyasa is in dire danger of extinction from this great land. It must be saved, if India is to give the moral and spiritual lead to world at large.” The incalculable havoc wrought by the erstwhile foreign rule has to be undone. The entire fabric of Indian society has to revert and go back to its former standards of right living and thinking. Our own house has to be set in good order before anything else. Then alone India Can dare think of leading other nations. The dark clouds of ignorance and unwanted materialism perpetrated upon the inherently spiritual people of this land by the devilish foreign ‘benefactors’ have first to be dispelled to the remotest frontiers of the earth. The people of this wonderful

land have to be made to unlearn all that the foreigners have forced upon them; they have to be re-educated along right lines and made to think for themselves along right grooves. This is a stupendous task to which our present leaders in every field of activity have to address themselves without any the least delay. I have infinite optimism in the essential goodness of the human race in general and in the people of this land in particular. This goodness has got to be rekindled and reawakened. That is all. May India prosper and grow from strength to still greater strength, able to hold her own against all odds, against all sorts of external dangers of aggression. May we build a great and glorious India that was the pride and dream of our forebears. May Maharshi Sivananda's intelligent efforts towards the achievement of this national ideal and dream be crowned with greater and greater success!

The above is not to be construed as a digression by any means. The work of the Maharshi has to be judged against this background to arrive at a reasonable appreciation of all his efforts towards a nation-wide spiritual and moral awakening. The real contribution of the Sage towards promoting India's greatness and glory, towards the re-education of our so-called 'educated' men and women, towards the right appreciation of moral and spiritual values above all else has got to be recognized. What the Sage has already done in this direction is probably unparalleled and cannot be equalled by the works of a solitary individual. At least he stands on the same footing as Gandhi, Nehru and others.

To come back to our subject: Maharshi Sivananda also began a round of tours and pilgrimages after the manner of the great World Teachers like Sankara, Ramanuja, Vallabha and others through the length and breadth of this land. In the year 1931 he set out on a pilgrimage to Mt. Kailas, Badrinath, Kedarnath, Tunganath and Triyuginath in the company of very highly cultured, learned and spiritually advanced Mahatmas like Swami Advaitanandaji Maharaj, Swami Swayam Jyotiji Maharaj, Brahmachari Yoganandaji and an aged Maharani of Singhai Estate by name Surat Kumari Devi. He circumambulated the snowy peaks of Kailas, the Abode of Lord Siva in eternal Trance, bathed in the immortal waters of Lake Manasarowar nearby, and utilised every moment in conversing, exchanging views and discussing the knotty and complex problems of the Vedantic Philosophy, singing of Bhajans and Kirtans in blissful states of self-forgetfulness. An account of this memorable pilgrimage has been published in a work entitled "A Trip to Kailas and Manasarowar" by the Maharshi immediately after the conclusion of the trip. He then proceeded to Gangasagar in Bengal, bathed in the sea there, worshipped at its famous shrine dedicated to Kapila Muni and returned to Ananda Kutir in Rishikesh in glowing health of body and mind.

There was a certain Kashmiri Brahmin by name Pt. Chand Narain Hatkauli who was a leading luminary of the Sitapur Bar and who used to render the Maharshi every help and patronage during the days of his Yoga practices. He was a great philosopher highly versed in Sanskrit literature, and who had made Action the philosophy of his life. He was an ideal householder for whom the Maharshi cherished the profoundest feelings of veneration and admiration. He persuaded the Maharshi to accompany him on a round of pilgrimages. They visited Mathura, Brindawan, did perambulation of the famous Govardhan Hill with its mythological association with Lord Krishna Himself, and then proceeded to Gaya. Here they visited the famous Visnhupad Temple at Budh Gaya and bathed in the Ganga.

Then they proceeded to Puri Jagannath on the eastern shores of India, bathed in the Bay of Bengal there, worshipped at the ancient temple of Lord Jagannath, one of the most popular and important Vaishnavite centres of pilgrimage, and then started for Rameswaram at the extreme corner of India in the South via Waltair. At Rameswaram, another very important centre of pilgrimage to all Hindus irrespective of their creeds, the Maharshi and his benefactor bathed in the sea, worshipped at its various temples and set out for Tiruvannamalai.

Tiruvannamalai is one of the five important places of orthodox Saivaism. Here Lord Siva in the form of Tejas Linga is installed in the huge temple dedicated to Him and worshipped as Arunachaleswara It is also famous for another reason. The celebrated Ramana Maharshi resides here in an Ashram named after him for the last 50 years and is considered one of the three important saints of the century, the other two being Sri Aurobindo of Pondicherry and Maharshi Sivananda himself.

Maharshi Sivananda worshipped Lord Siva who resides here in the form of the Arunachala Hill, perambulated the Hill, then entered the temple dedicated to the Lord Siva nearby, made obeisance to the Lord installed therein representing the Fire aspect of the Supreme, and then proceeded to the Ramana Ashram about a mile away. Here he had the pleasure and the privilege of coming in contact with the great Sage, the Superman of Paul Brunton, sang a few devotional Bhajans that thrilled the audience there and electrified the whole atmosphere. The Sage Ramana Maharshi himself was greatly moved by these melodies and expressed his personal pleasure.

Then the two proceeded to Sri Aurobindo's Ashram at Pondicherry, one of the most modern and well-run institutions of its kind in India. It was 15th August, the birthday of Sage Aurobindo. The Maharshi went round the precincts of the Ashram, observed everything keenly and minutely and made a note of everything which was to help him later on in the organization and management of his own Ashrama in such a modern, efficient and praise. Worthy manner. Then they returned to Rishikesh subsequently.

Between 1932 and 1940 Maharshi Sivananda toured the whole of the Punjab, Kashmir, United Provinces, and Bihar. Wherever he went he gave impressive demonstrations of Yoga Asanas and scientific breathing and regulation of breath to school and college students. He also gave a number of lectures in Brahmacharya, Ethics, Character building, Bhakti, Karma Yoga and Philosophy in simple and easily assailable style. Everybody stood dazed at his energy, enthusiasm and interest in the regeneration of the young boys and girls, the future hope and glory of India. He also delivered several presidential addresses in various places like Lahore, Meerut, Srinagar, Jammu, Delhi, Lucknow, Sitapur, Laksimpur, Ayodhya, Aligarh, Mathura. Gwalior, Etawah, Agra and Ambala, in his capacity as the President-elect of various annual religious and Sankirtan Conferences. People wondered at his child-like simplicity, unassuming manners, charming personality, love, kindness and unfailing courtesy.

He breathed purity, simplicity, highest standards of morality and discipline, wherever he went. He printed and distributed free of cost several thousands of pamphlets, booklets, leaflets and folders to one and all who came in contact with him. Every page and every line from his pen contained words of power and seemed to come from the depths of his innermost soul. Many were converted and transfigured. Materialism seemed to tremble before his personality. People began to take to simple living and high thinking. They began to see in him a rare saint of magnanimity, spotlessness of character, charity and faith in God who had few equals in modern times either in India or in the whole world. His prestige and reputation grew like the waxing moon, and was entering a period of highest popularity, esteem and affection of the people far and near.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MAHARSHI AS A SCHOLAR

The distinguished poet-philosopher, Alexander Pope, epitomized the grand philosophy of his life in the following beautiful ode, which I commend to the reader as adequate food for serious thought and consideration:

"Happy the man, whose wish and ca A few paternal acres bound, Content to breathe his native air, In his own ground.

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread, Whose flocks supply him with attire; Whose trees in summer yield him shade, In winter fire.

Blessed: who can unconcernedly find Hours, days and years slide soft away, In health of body, peace of mind, Quietness by day, sound sleep at night; Study and rest, together mix'd With sweet recreation and innocence,

Which most doth please with meditation. Thus let me live, unseen, unknown, Thus unlamented let me die; Steal from the world, and not a stone Tell where i lie."

Lovely aspirations these, if one can afford to adhere strictly to them, come what may, and resolutely eschew all other tempting and side-tracking baits of life. Blessed is the soul living such a retired and fruitful life of illimitable peace and joy that it afforded. I do not mean to suggest that this is the highest philosophy of life achieved by the rambles of the human intellect, but I do mean definitely that this is a sufficiently high one, forming a most important link in the long chain leading man to the ultimate pinnacle of Truth. Milton, Keats. Coleride, Southey and Wordsworth are but a few noteworthy illustrations of literary geniuses, whose thirst for learning and wisdom provides us ample inspiration to pursue ursue such an ideal in life. In modern times, I cannot think of a more glowing instance than that of our noble Prime Minister Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru who, presiding over an important conference of great scholars and historians of the land convened at the Indian Capital last year observed how very delightedly he would have loved to dedicate his entire life at the sacred altar of the Goddess of Wisdom and Learning spending all his time in some quiet library amidst books of undying interest to him, had the All-Wise Creator in His Supreme Wisdom willed so! Indeed such wishful thinking is not uncommon amongst the intelligent and educated men of all ages and climes who have had the blessedness of tasting the sweet nectar of genuine scholarship in a greater or smaller measure in the happy days of their educational career. But, alas, how few of these were actually blessed with the fructification of their fond dreams of life-long scholarship! Singularly fortunate is the individual who incarnates on this fair earth for the sole purpose of dedicating his whole life at the feet of the Goddess of Learning and partaking of the consequent rich intellectual dishes. And Maharshi Sivananda, in my considered opinion, comes under this unique category.

The wise South Indian poetess-philosopher, Avval once sang in her own inimitable style a lovely verse packed with wisdom itself which if rendered in plain English runs as follows: 'What one knows is but a handful; what remains to be known is vast as the universe itself. Therefore, O pandits, never boast of your high accomplishments or learning; even the yonder ant is pitiably limited in its dimensions."

Sir Isaac Newton, another worthy votary of true learning considered himself as a tiny baby picking amall pebbles and shells of knowledge by the seashore, while the vast ocean of truth lay all unexplored before him. Indeed does there live a scholar worth the name who, the more he learns and knows the smaller and the humbler he does not become?

Why should the professor of philosophy be proud or assume airs? Surely he is not a professor of biology or physiology. He is not a professor of Life or Cosmos. There is no limit to the acquisition of knowledge, and you cannot possibly acquire mastery in all knowledges in one span of life. So the wise advise us to be humble and to labour incessantly for long years for the acquisition of the essence of all knowledge that will enable us to unlock the doors of Truth, the ultimate goal of all existence.

Again, there are subjects that are very important and those that are not. Literature, Art, Psychology, Philosophy, Physiology, Medicine, Mathematics, Geometry, Physics, Chemistry and History are all conducive to the proper exercise and development of the intellect, the awakening of right understanding and the solution of the various riddles of the universe. Mastery of these subjects have produced almost all the greatest men of the world and benefacters of humanity. We should strive to concentrate our single-minded attention on the more important of these subjects of utility to the exclusion of others and dive deep into their heart's core. I would even go a step further and give the first place to Literature, Psychology and Philosophy. These must be studied by all the intelligent men and women of the world, if they wish to enjoy the highest happiness and the greatest good this mortal world can give us. Maharshi Sivananda is a unique master in this triple field.

From the early days of his school and collegiate career, this extraordinary child of destiny exhibited an uncommon mania for learning and acquisition of knowledge. He loved his books and his classroom, his teachers and professors, the weekly literal and debating competitions, the sonorous thunders and the rhetorical deliveries with a relish too rare to be met with and took a vigorous and lively part in all of them. He was the star debater of his school and college and took infinite pains to gather and marshal facts and present them in an elegant, impressive and scholarly manner in a cool, calm and crystal-clear address that was listened to in pin-drop silence by an appreciative audience of fellow-students and professors. He always carried the day and won encomiums from all round

This special fondness for intellectual pursuits is, I have no doubt, due greatly to heredity, for his fore. Bears like St. Appayya Dikshitar, St. Sundaresa Swamigal and St. Appayya Sivam were all profound scholars of Sanskrit literature and Vedic lore, besides being highly advanced and practical men of spiritual illumination and experience. And it is their red blood that runs through the veins of the Maharshi, which enabled him to display such amazing gifts while at school and college. Later on his partiality for subjects like Philosophy and Religion gradually manifested itself and resulted in inducing him to take up the study of these subjects with that earnestness and devotion that characterised such highly important studies by genuine scholars of all times. He studied the works of such important and distinguished philosophers of the West as Herbert Spencer, Plato, Kant, Aristotle, Hegel, Nietzsche, Voltaire, Emerson, Descartes, Schopenhauer, Spinoza and others in a systematic and thorough manner and then took up Indian Philosophy proper. He studied the classical Upanishads, the Bhagavad-Gita, the Vedanta Sutras, the Six Systems of Indian Philosophy, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Bhagawata and other works and then mastered the works of the great Acharyas like Sankara and Sri Ramanuja. All this he did while at Malaya discharging his professional duties as a doctor.

He was a tireless and voracious reader. He never read nonsense. He never read anything in which he was not interested, and his interest always centred round Philosophy and Religion. He never read a book which he did not master. He took copious notes from all that he perused or studied, not by copying from

the book line by line but by putting down everything on paper from his prodigious memory. And he is a very swift reader and can finish reading a book within half the time you and I might take generally.

Study of philosophical works necessitated him to take up to the study of the all-important subject, Psychology. He studied Frued, Jung, Addler and others and compared their achievements with the ancient Hindu Rishis like Patanjali, Gautama and Kanada. He was able to give due credit to the discoveries and new theories propounded by later research workers, for he analyzed the works of each with the intellectual acumen characteristic of a genuine student of the subject. He was not dogmatic or fanatical. No, never.

Gardually his interest in Comparative Philosophy and Religion was awakened. He studied a number of standard works by recognized savants of the subjects, both Eastern and Western, and was in a posiion to bestow a liberal appreciation of every religion in the world without being tied down by narrow pre. Judices and conventional biases. In short, before his arrival in the Himalayas consequent upon his renunciation of the world, he was a perfect master of the subjects which he subsequently began to explore and practise with a view to obtain an intuitive perception of the Absolute Reality, through meditation and Samadhi.

Between 1924 and 1940 he devoted a good deal of his precious time to the study and practice of the philosophy of Love that Christ Jesus preached, to the famous Sermon on the Mount and to the wonderful precepts contained in that masterpiece of religion and morality, viz, ON THE IMITATION OF CHRIST by Thomas A.Kempis. He studied the lives of St. Augustine, St. Francis of Assissi, St. Paul and other inspired prophets of God and obtained some insight into the sort of spiritual life that leads one to the realization of Truth. He studied the Koran, the Zend Avesta, the works of ten the Shik Gurus, all the available literature on Buddhism, the works on Saiva Siddhanta, of the twelve Alwar Saints of the south. The movements like the Brahma Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Movement, etc, and understood them in their right perspective. He is not antogonistic to any of these. He admires all these great spiritual and religious waves that swept the land and gave some impetus in the spiritual field, each in its own way.

His library contains a marvellous collection of books on Yoga, Vedanta, Bhakti, Indian Philosophy.

Western Philosophy, biographies of saints and sages, Buddhism, Mohammedanism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, rare works of famous saints and sages of the world in English, Sanskrit, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and other Indian languages. I believe it is a truly comprehensive collection in the field in which he is a specialist and master.

He has all the marks of a true scholar. His very personality spreads rays of knowledge and wisdom. He is always calm wearing a mien of scriptural serenity that remains perfectly still and undisturbed under all circumstances. He is a mass of knowledge itself from head to foot. He is always silent, for he is so full. He has nothing to say generally but eagerly listens to others with a friendly look that wins your heart within a few minutes. He is always engrossed deeply in something which nobody can decipher or guess. He seems so different from all others, a stranger from some foreign land. There is philosophy in his look, in his words, in his personality, in his gait and in all that he does! He is ever BO busy, reading, writing, instructing, lecturing, nursing the sick and the like. He seldom smiles, and when he does smile the whole universe seems to smile with him.

CHAPTER IX

THE MAHARSHI AS A WRITER

"Let all men reflect with care and attention The passage of the soul through diverse forms, Of Brahma, Devas, Men, Beasts, Plants and Stones In accordance with their good or evil deeds, And also let them apply their minds to Virtue only."

-Manu Smriti XII-22, 42, 86.

Sage Sivananda is a prolific and popular writer of singularity and distinction on religious, ethical and philosophical topics. His works are justly famous for their unparalleled simplicity of style, clarity of thought, soundness of logic, directness of appeal and amazing power of words that perforce grip the attention of the reader and work out a rapid spiritual transfiguration of his life. His various spiritual lessons and precepts so wisely conceived are exceedingly attractive and inspire the reader to give them an immediate fair trial. His matchless prescriptions for life's ills, lacerations and bruises are based upon years of intensive and weary experiments, careful observations and precise deductions carried out at his Himalayan Spiritual Laboratory known all over the world as AnandaKutir. The admirable remedies he suggests are amazingly potent and invariably lead all Seekers of Truth to the portals of the resplendent City of God.

His vehement exhortations are irresistible, inimitable, elegant and sublime. The words and phrases he employs are a peerless healing balm ef great potency and unfailing efficacy. In the estimate of no less eminent and worthy a personage than His Excellency Sri C. Rajagopalachari, the then philosopher Governor-General of India, "they are gold beaten into all sorts of shape."

To the thousands of enthusiastic spiritual aspirants the world over he is the one and only one Divine Alchemist who definitely holds the secret of the recipe for the life-giving Elixir of Immortalitythe Panacea in the manufacture of which he has specialized himself in the course of over 25 years of dedicated spiritual life and has attained undoubted degrees of consummation and excellence, and which he so generously and with such kingly grace distributes to one and all destined or privileged to drink deep at the Fountainhead of his huge JnanaYajna (Wisdom Sacrifice) unparalleled in the entire history of world's spiritual progress.

Maharshi Sivananda is a writer par excellence for all ages and climes. He is fired by a supreme religious fervour to work out the spiritual salvation of the entire human race by ushering in a worldwide moral and spiritual regeneration or awakening. He feels for the trials and tribulations, the pains and sorrows that eternally grind the human race with an intensity that baffles description, and has joyfully come down to the lower planes of this gross world with the sole humanitarian object of lending a helping hand to the suffering and the afflicted and lifting them up from the quagmire of rank materi. Alism and ignorance in which they lie buried. Those conversant with his various works feel certain beyond the least shadow of doubt that he is a genuinely inspired prophet and seer.

The Swami speaks to us from the mystic depths of his inmost soul. Every word emanating from his sacred mouth or pen seems to have been transmitted to us from regions unknown and unfamiliar to most of us. Pregnant with the power and magnetism of a Jeevanmukta, his writings are buttresed and purified on the crucible of his heart by the Divine Flame that ceaselessly burns aglow therein, and produce a deep and

lasting effect on the reader's mind. He writes as easily as he breathes, naturally and spontaneously, without the least effort or exertion on his part. While writing he seems to forget for the moment that it is intended for publication; hence his utter disregard for literary excellence, style, choice of words and phrases. He never rewrites anything, and never cares to embellish a paragraph here or an idea there with a better or more beautiful way of expression. He is supremely confident of and content with his dry-as-dust, blunt, terse style the schoolbody's way of telling things to his classmates. What he writes today appears tomorrow in some journal or in the form of a 16 page pamphlet. He is never bothered about what others think of his writings, how the press receives or treats them, and does not seem to be particularly elated or pleased with the laudatory and favourable comments often appearing in the book review columns of newspapers and periodicals He feels he is writing for the benefit of the struggling aspirante, and needs nobody to convince him that all aspirants must and should be profited by his works. What an extraordinary will-power!

His instructions to the different gardes of Yogic students bear a singularly human touch. He seems to be perfectly aware of the capabilities and capaci ties of those for whom he writes and never lays down injunctions and prohibitions or asks them to subject themselves to austerities and disciplines which they cannot triumphantly go through; but, on the other hand, he infuses and injects abundant spiritual strength and vigour into them and goads them on to push ahead with their practices with suitable advices and prescriptions according to the needs of their respective cases.

He has no wish to make a parade of his vast knowledge of the subject he writes about, but employs the simplest and the most lucid style of expression possible with a view to make himself understood clearly by one and all. He does not write for the glamour of name and fame, as he is often uncharitably and sometimes ignorantly accused, for a person writing with such selfish motives will also try to display his literary skill and get added name and fame. He writes unselfishly, for purely humanitarian reasons, with a view to awaken the spiritual consciousness of humanity and to quide the earnest spiritual aspirants along right lines. That is precisely the reason why he never aimed at literary productions or pedantry, but is wisely content with his unassuming, conversational, homely style. He analyzes threadbare the most abstract and knotty problems of philosophy in his own inimitable manner and language and makes them exceedingly intelligible to the savant and the student: He has a clear and a comprehensive perception of the peculiar difficulties that beset the path of the true practitioner and goes on to suggest very fine remedial measures to combat and conquer them.

Yogi Sri Suddhananda Bharati of Pondicherry thinks, "There is no historical parallel to the magnificent spiritual services rendered untiringly by the Maharshi."

The citizens of Kasi in a message to Swami Sivananda on the eve of his Diamond Jubilee celebrations in September, 1947 say: 'Swami Sivanandaji is one of the greatest Yogins of the present age He is, like Buddha, Sankara, Christ, Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanya, Tulsidas and Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, guiding the spiritual attainments of mankind. From the hoary and holy Himalayas he is transmitting the flood of spiritual vibrations throughout the Universe. He has attained the highest perfections in Yogic Sadhana by his present penances and past Samaskaras. There is always in this world a fight between good and evil, spiritualism and materialism, Rama and Ravana, saint and satan For the time being it appears that materialism has the upper hand but in reality spiritualism always triumphs in the end. Science may attain the zenith of perfection and atomic powers may des. Troy nations but cannot conquer the spiritual forces working through the great Rishis and Mahatmas. Swami Sivanandaji, in this age, is a fountain of spiritualism. He has given true happiness to the unhappy and has turned many devils into saints, and atheists into theists. We, the humble citizens of this sacred Kasi, highly appreciate the work done by Swami Sivanandaji of Ananda Kutir for the spiritual wellbeing of humanity without any distinction of

caste, creed and community, and pray to Lord Viswanath for his long life and good health on this happy occasion of his Diamond Jubilee."

Mr. Gosta Sjogren of Sweden writes: "I can with happiness and appreciation speak of the great importance of Sri Swami Sivananda's works. He has appointed himself to give out his knowledge about the Divine Life. The only way to be able to give peace and happiness to the suffering humanity lies in the manner mentioned in his teachings. It will enable us to find the real value for life There is no difference between us being people of the West or the East, though all of us are striving for the attainment of one goal. With the help of Sri Swami Sivananda's teachings we can much quicker reach the goal"

Another admirer, Mr. Signe Aagaard writes from Denmark: "When I regard this great religious preacher, Maharshi Sivananda, who as a powerful river on its wandering towards its goal, in blessing the surrounding world, I am filled with dumb admization. From his abode in the Himalayas, he is transmitting his message over the world, and pouring forth his energy for the spiritual uplift of humanity. I have from those far-off hills felt his cosmic love and force. His love overpowers me, This great teacher's kind. Ness and charming simplicity goes to the heart. May the Lord bestow upon him a long life for the welfare of the suffering humanity."

The famous Indian economist, Sri Manu Subedar writes from Bombay: "I mark Sivananda out as an outstanding figure in this age of increasing atheism and demoralization. No one can look at the vast range of subjects on which he has written without feeling that there is no topic of importance to the seeker and the aspirant after spiritual knowledge which he has not dealt with. The Maharshi writes in a style which is clear and which instils the lessons, which he wants to give, in the mind of the reader with great facility and with relatively small effort on his part. The comprehensive and lucid teachings contained in his books have rightly merited attention in all parts of the world."

The distinguished Indian Philosopher, Dr BL Atreya, M.A., D Litt, of the Benares Hindu University wrote sometime ago: "I feel that Sivananda is a very inspiring, energetic, zealous, affectionate, sympathetic and a very sociable personality His living contact and teachings are a sure source of solace to those persons who fail to adjust to the demands of modern life and to those who are tired of the sham pleaures of life For such persons (the Maharshi) has a magic in his hand and a charming flute in his mouth They listen to him with rapt attention and blindly follow his lead, and experience a unique relief which they never had before. Swamiji's unbounded love and kindness forcefully draw me closer and closer to him. He is doing a wonderful work which is bringing peace to thousands of souls who would have remained deprived of them if Swamiji had not brought them home. His message of Divine Life is penetrating the masses and classes alike. He is waking up people from false valuation of life. His spiritualism is dynamic and practical. He is one of the few persons whom I have found living the ideal of a Jeevanmukta, depicted graphically in the Yogavasishtha. I wish every success to his efforts in keeping the soul of India alive. May his spiritual force penetrate the heart of the so-called civilized nations of the world who are at present engaged in bitter strife with each other for the petty and ephemeral gains on which the ancient Rishis of this land never put any value This is the humble prayer and wish of one who has great sympathy for the work he is doing."

Another Indian Philosopher, Dr. Mohamed Hafiz Syed, M.A, L.T, Ph.D D. Litt, of the Allahabad University wrote: "I cannot adequately describe my feelings of admiration for the great work that you have been doing for the revival of spiritual ideals in this unfortunate land. You have done more single handed than many teachers put together.

You have created interest in Life Divine a nongst a large number of educated people in different parta of India. Freedom of India for its own sake minus all the ancient spiritual glory has no value India is going

to play a great part in the future civilization of mankind and therefore it is all the more necessary that her dutiful sons should do their best to disseminate spiritual ideals side by side with political propaganda. I pray fervently to the Supreme Lord of our being to spare you for many more years to come so that you may be able to carry on the much-neg. Lected work in our dear land."

Justice Sri N. Chandrasekhara Iyer of the Madras High court says: "Thoroughly immersed in Hindu religious lore, the Maharshi draws lessons from the ancient Indian ways of life which are of universal application, and seeks to apply them to modern con. Ditions of Society. His love for humanity at large is deep and genuine. He is not a cave dweller, lost in meditative contemplation of the unknown or the Absolute, and seeking his own salvation; rather, he is moulded in the shape of Swami Dayananda and Swami Vivekananda and he feels intensely that he has a message of spirituality for the world and that his mission is to propagate it.... ... In these days of bitterness and strife, turmoil and chaos, truly spiritual men who ingeminate peace, love and brotherhood are needed. Maharshi Sivananda is one of such men. He is a powerful exponent of the true Philosophy of life and has a dynamic personality He occupies a pre-eminent position in the list of modern spiritual teachers. May his unselfish labours for the regeneration of our dear mother-land continue for many, many more years to come and produce a rich harvest of all-round progress."

The Sage meditates and writes concurrently. He remains in his usual state of Sahaja Samadhi and his writings are the rich fruits of his inner spiritual illumination and enlightenment. He seems to be merely recording the messages and utterances of someone deep within him. His mind remains in tune with the Cosmic Mind and his soul with the Cosmic soul, and whatever he experiences in those blissful moments of meditative absorption is faithfully and unerringly recorded by his hand for being handed down to posterity. His writings are, therefore, on a footing of equality with those of the ancient Rishis and Maharshis of Vedic times, the hoary authors of the great Upanishads and other sacred books of this land.

The well-known Indian author and story-teller, the late Sri K.S. Venkataramani, a great admirer of the Maharshi's works and personality once wrote, "..... Hinduism has survived these ages of stress and storm only to deliver some such message to the world, and the work of the Maharshi in this direction is full of the highest value to India and the world."

Another learned savant of Sri Sankara Mutt, Bombay branch, in a grateful message of greetings to Sivananda wrote: "Who can correctly appraise your greatness of work? You are a great man, great inintellect, and greater in service to the suffering man. Kind. You are rendering a magnificent service to the Hindu Religion through your writings and Upan. Yasas (preachings). No one in modern times has rendered such a unique and monumental service as you have to the cause of the Vedic and Yogic cultures which alone will awaken the ignorant people smitten by the sins of Samsara (materialism)." A very true and precious estimate from an organi. Zation that wields the greatest power and influence in our land.

Miss Marie Bernard, a remarkable Parisian lady thinks: "There is a dynamic power in your teachings and that dynamite is the very breath of the Almighty Lord."

Prose, poetry, drama, dialogues, short stories, parables, anecdotes. Films and gramophone records are all wisely employed by the Maharshi to convey his dynamic message of Yoga and Vedanta to every home in India and to all the corners of the world as well.

Yes, the Savant is undoubtedly a poet. He has come to sing the Song of Life and is still singing. The voice is melodious and the message enchanting. But judge him not by the usual conventional standards to estimate the true value of his poetry. He is above all conventions. He does not care for mette or rhythm or prosody, but expresses the most abstruse philosophical subjects while he is overwhelmed by strong floods

of emotion and inspiration to elevate humanity. Further he is a God-realized Sage and this alone easily makes him a poet who breathes freshness, delicacy, imagination, intuition, mysticism, power and super-consciousness. He writes poetic prose. Indeed even his prose savours of poetry, when you get into the spirit of his writings and when you are filled with purity. He sings his compositions in a sweet and melodious voice that hypnotizes you and produces a lasting effect on your mind. Just read these few lines and think for yourself if they are prose or poetry.

"You are born for higher things, A brilliant future is awaiting you; Apply diligently to Yoga, Unfold all latent faculties."

"Yield not to unmanliness, Shake off faint-heartedness Stand up, be bold and cheerful, Rejoice, enjoy and be blissful."

"Let the world scorn and scoff at you, Let showers of insults be poured on you, Let people call you a scoundrel and rogue, Fear not! Thou art none but Brahınan Supreme.'

"Brahman Immortal is all this that is, Nothing is many, though many may seem

"Difficulties, adversities and sorrows Are Karmic purgations;

They instil mercy in the heart, They turn the mind more towards God, They are blessings in disguise, They help your evolution, And strengthen your will and power of endurance, They make you more wise and dispassionate."

As I have already said in the foregoing paragraphs, the Maharshi, like the Seers of the Upanishads, records in his writings only those aspects of spiritual truths that are practically revealed to him in his deepest meditations or are experienced by him in other higher ways. As his mind perpetually remains attuned to the Universal Mind and his soul to the Universal Soul, he is at all times in the blissful desireless state of cosmic consciousness; and every work that he does is really done by God only through the instrumentality of his body! It is God who eats through his mouth, sees through his eyes, hears through his ears, speaks through his voice, and works or writes through his hand. Every syllable attributed to his holy pen is the word of God only. Otherwise, how could one account for the tremendously powerful effect his writings and lectures produce on the minds of his readers and hearers?

His writings breathe a harmonious synthesis of the different paths advocated in our scriptures. His very personality is a glorious synthesis of the philo. Sophies of Love, Action, Yoga and Wisdom, and that is the reason why he finds it foreign to his inherent nature to restrict himself to any one of these systems of thought in any of his writings. To him the different paths advocated in the Hindu scriptures are but supplementa and compliments to the achievement of the one goal. For instance, he stands on unrebuttable grounds, when he asks: 'How can a really full-blown devotee of God remain without feeling for the pains and sorrows of mankind and alleviating their griefs in howsoever humble a measure? How can a true Karma-Yogi be without full illumination or realization? How can a Vedanti or philosopher be without devotion of the highest type to the Supreme?" Indeed the different paths are not watertight com. Partments each excluding the other and standing quite apart.

There can be little doubt as to the Maharshi's contribution to the world of literature in the theological and spiritual fields. There are many in India who will agree with me when I venture to say that my Master and Superman of modern times easily excels such famous luminaries as Swami Dayananda, Swami Vivekananda and Swami Rama Tirtha without stirring out of his Himalayan caves or flying about on his tours of world conquest in the realm of spirituality as did his great predecessors in the last century. I have little doubt that his writings have influenced a far larger section of humanity than did the writinge of

Swami Vivekananda and others. Indeed it is certainly no exaggeration to say that there is no parallel to the huge charity effected by the Maharshi in his dissemination of spiritual knowledge far and wide through the medium of his writings and free literature in the shape of pamphlets, booklets, leaflets and other means in a language that is spoken and understood by the largest number of people in the world.

In the following pages I would like to comment on the more important and valuable of his works in brief and record their utility to every citizen of the world in these vastly changed and changing times:

Yoga in daily life: This book has been written by the Maharshi for the exclusive benefit of such of those as could not devote much time to think of the hereafter in a scientific spirit. The treatment of Yoga under various heads has left nothing to be desired. I would like to commend this work to every householder be he an Indian or European. Consistent with the spirit of all his works, the author has employed a language that is seldom excelled except by the late lamented Mahatma Gandhi in the political field. The "Leader", Allahabad hails this as a "book with a message of hope, of success in life, of peace, of bliss and of the secret of life itself."

Dialogues From Upanishads: A boon divine to those who are unable to dive deep and swim freely in the vast and fathomless ocean of the sacred classical Upanishads. A neophyte is bewildered, when he takes to the study of the Upanishads. The author has done a distinct service to the world by culling out the dialogues from the Upanishads which treat of the knowledge of the Self and presenting them in a lucid and impressive manner. The knotty and intricate portions are nicely explained and the whole subject is made quite interesting and attractive The author himsell claims in his introduction that a book of this description has never been presented to the public as yet. It initiates the beginner into the mysteries of Vedanta and enables him to get an insight into the meaning and spirit of the classical Upanishads.

Sure Ways for Success in Life & God-Realization: The title of the book itself clearly conveys the nature of the contents. This is a new kind of Daily Guide to Super-Living, the boiled down essence of years of experience and research. Are you unpopular, un. Happy, lonesome, sickly, in a rut? Do you feel you are an inferior personality? This book offers a wonderful technique to make your life what you exactly want it to be. You can win admiration, success, big money, and what not, through the development of strange powers dormant within you. You can definitely outgrow your environments, overcome your obstacles and achieve your fondest ambitions. You can become a MASTER of yourself as well as of others. You can overcome your weakness, your worries, your fear-complexes, and get all the good things of life—money, power, position and all-round happiness. And all these you can have without foregoing your rights of citizenship in the Golden City of God.

Practice of Karma Yoga: Himself a glorious personification of the Gita Ideal contained in the oft-quoted and simple lines, "Be in the world, but be out of it; live like the water on the lotus-leaf,"and an Ideal Karma Yogi with few equals engaged in the ceaseles service of his country and humanity at large in the true spirit of our scriptural injuctions, the Maharshi, like one truly inspired, discusser in this comprehensive, work the knotty subject of Karma-Yoga under such valuable and baffling heads as the qualifications of a Karma-Yogi, Law of Karma, Law of Causation, Law of Action and Reaction, Law of Compensation, law of Retribution, Law of Resis. Tance, Duties of man, the three Qualities of Nature, Karma and Freedom, Philosophy of Right and Wrong, Free-will versus Destiny the Western Theory of Evolution, Doctrine of Reincarnation, Philosophy of Sin, Glory of Sex-sublimation or Celibacy, Meditation and Action, the Wheel of the Universe, Scope for personal Exertion, Action and Inaction, Action and Actor and the Superiority of Karma Yoga to othet pathr. As you sow, so you reap. By the skilful performance of action, man can outgrow his environments, and become the architect of his fortune. Work for work's sake, without any motive and the dedication of all works and the fruits thereof to the

Lord enthroned in the hearts of all are the twin desideratum for the successful performance of all actions. This book will serve as an ideal introduction to the study of the philosophy of action that forms one of the pillars of the Indian philosophy.

Practice of Bhakti-Yoga: All the 400 pages of this sublime work ring with the supreme note that the dire need of the present hour is Love and Love alone. Love is the greatest power on earth. It can tame wild, ferocious animals also. The essence of religion is Love. The devotee is shown the easy path to God-realization through love or pure devotion to the Lord, a path admirably suited for men and women cf emotional temperament. The Aphorisms of Sage Narada are rendered into sweet and simple English in an exclusive chapter. Every possible difficulty or doubt assailing the devotee is wisely foreseen and admirably solved. I am tempted to appeal to the educational authorities to prescribe this as another alternative text book on Religion in all India schools and colleges.

Vedanta in Daily Life: The core and cream of the Vedanta Philosophy as lived up to and experienced by the Maharshi in his deepest and most profound meditations is compressed in this invalvable work which is a veritable vade-mecum and indispensable companion to all genuine students of Vedanta. The abstract subject of Vedanta is rendered absolutely practical and lucid by one who is a powerful Lion of Vedanta in modern times. His answer to the question “What is Vedanta?” is wonderfully revealing and quite sound. Some of the topics dealt with are the Several Categories of Vedanta, the Relationship between Brahman, Ishwara and Jiva, the Four Means of Salvation, Brahman of the Vedanta. Philosophy, importance and significance of OM, Enquiry of ‘Who am I?, Philosophy of Pleasure and Pain, Soul’s Pilgrimage After Death, and a Compara. Tive Study of the Sankhya and Vedanta Philosophies. None but a Sage of the highest spiritual experience and illumination dare undertake and succeed in presenting a book of this kind to the world at large.

Practical Lessons in Yoga: One of the best books written by the Maharshi designed to meet the re. Quirements of European and American students of Yoga. The subject of Yoga is presented herein by a living Adept in twelve easy and attractive lessons in a most exquisite and presentable style. It is in the opinion of several modern scholars the most scientifically written. No student of Yoga can afford to be without a copy of it. It is a very remarkable synopsis of Raja-Yoga of Patanjali Maharshi with additional features.

Practice of Vedanta: The first important work on the subject of Vedanta containing many valuable and practical instructions to the student of the subject A striking feature of this book is that it assures Samadhi in six months to the earnest practitioner and takes him to the highest flights of realization and experience of the Nirguna Brahman.

Practice of Yoga, Vol I and II: This is an entrancing work. The relation between mind and body is dealt with in a style that enchants the reader. Such of you as think that practice of Yoga is a subject specially reserved for the old and the indigent and that it has no relation to practical life will have a welcome disappointment on a perusal of this excellent volume. Bhakti, Jnana and Kriya Yogas which are taught in the Gita and form the subject of innumerable controversies have been explained by the author in a lucid style and by means of suitable illustrations from the lives of great man of India in the past.

In Vol II the author deals with the advanced courses in Yoga Sadhana Many practical lessons on memory-culture, thought-culture, will-culture, etc., will doubtless help the aspirant in getting material and spiritual success. Easy methods are suggested for destroying the impurities of mind and its evil propensities and habits.

Spiritual Lessons. Part I and II: Part I deals with 1 to 500 and Part II from 501 to 1000 lessons help. Ful to the aspirant in the spiritual path The reader's mind is bound to be elevated by reading such a book by an Adept in Yoga The entire Indian Philosophy is condensed in an admirable fashion in these two volumes.

Yoga-Asanas: In a review of this work by the London journal, "AROUND THE WORLD" the reviewer observes: "This book may be described as a Hindu health book. It goes more into the details of the actual carrying out of spiritual practices and illustrates the various beneficial postures and exercises adopted during meditations and termed "Asanas, Bandhas, Mudras and Pranayams." There is a table which gives an interesting list of ailments and the names of Asanas which may be carried out to effect relief or cure. Many of its injunctions are admirable. As a glance at the 'Ten Rules of Yoga" will reveal." Science of Pranayama: Pranayama is the restraint of the vital energies, which tingle through the nerves of persons. It is said that a person who conquers this is the conqueror of his own existence on the physical and mental planes. This science reached its perfection in India several thousands of years ago. Mabarshi Sivananda gives in this book in detail the several ways by which Pranayama should be practised. Written in an intelligent way, it should appeal to a large number of the reading public interested in the subject. It is a very practical treatise from the pen of one who is a Yogeshwara.

Brahmacharya, Part I, II and III: The principles of Brahmacharya or sex-sublimation as understood and practised by our ancient Rishis are explained by an Adept in the subject in simple prose. The author suggests practical methods by the employment of which Brahmacharya ceases to be terror and a becomes a matter-of-fact ideal worthy of being realized. These three volumes are eminently fitted for the school and college students not only in India but throughout the world It is earnestly hoped that the high principles enunciated by the Maharshi will be quickly realized by all educational authorities in Free India and before long we shall have Brahmacharya as a compulsory subject in all schools. This is a masterly treatise and a positive contribution to the building up of a strong and vital nation that is the dream ci cur leaders and statesmen.

Kundalini Yoga: The theory that underlies the Kundalini has been analyzed to its thinnest filaments and practical methods have been given to awaken this great pristine force in all individuals. It explains the theory and illustrates the practice of KundaliniYoga To the eager aspirant this book will serve as a kindly light that leads him on through the dark alleys of an as yet unexplored branch of Yogic exercises; while to the layman it contains a wealth of new information which is bound to be a very happy addition to his present knowledge of Yogic culture. Detailed instructions on all the methods of Sadhana for awakening the Mysterious Kundalini are given. It is a creditable addition to the literature on Yoga based on practical experience and weary Sadhanas.

Raja Yoga: The original Aphorisms of Maharshi Patanjali written by him in four chapters are now given a new classification into fourteen chapters to render the subject very, very clear and attractive. The original Sanskrit text, word by word meaning. Notes and commentary enhance the value of the work. The chapter on mind should help the students much in their attempts to conquer their own minds. Advanced lessons in Raja Yoga are described herein with all the necessary instructions. A matchless work that easily excels Swami Vivekananda's RajaYoga".

Mind, Its Mysteries and Control, Part I and II: This work should easily gain for the author the pride of place among the psychologists of today. The author has done full justice to his theme, and has clearly shown how it is essential for human beings to be perfectly aware of the functions and contents of mind so that they may lead a life of happiness and comfort on earth. And then this life on earth, lived in a regulated fashion, might ensure a happy life hereafter. This is undoubtedly a supremely original work based on laborious experiments with the mind. The author has a remarkable understanding and workings

of the mind and is well-equipped to control it. Would the modern psychologists, both Eastern and Western, kindly peruse this work to enable them to make further experiments and deeper studies? Of course, the author had mainly the interests and needs of spiritual aspirants at heart in the compilation of this stupendous book.

Srimad Bhagavad Gita: The Bhagavad Gita is the quintessence of the ancient Upanishads. It imparts to humanity the Science of Brahman. It is a compendium of all Systems of Hindu Philosophy and an epitome of the Mahabharata. It holds a unique place in the sacred literature of the world It offers solace and strength to one and all. It is the constant companion and comforter, friend, philosopher and guide to the philosophically-inclined scholars and savants, not only of India but of the whole world. It is a gospel of divinity meant for all, irrespective of caste or colour. It assures Deliverance to one and all who study it daily and try to live in the spirit inculcated therein. It is the Bible of the Hindus.

There are innumerable translations and interpretations of this sacred work by Eastern and Western scholars and saints. Every interpreter looks at it from a particular angle. In fact the 700 verses comprising this book are so elastic and flexible that they are amenable to every kind of interpretation. It is available in all the languages of the world.

Here is an interpretation of this wonderful work from the practical inter spiritual experiences and meditations of the greatest of living Vogins and Saints of today that is at once brilliant, impressive and sublime. The commentary is scholarly and lucid. A definite contribution to the world's thought and literature, it serves as an admirable guide to real spiritual aspirants and solves all their doubts and difficulties.

Principal Upanishads. Vol. I and II: Volume I contains original Sanskrit text, notes, meaning and commentary on Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna and Mundaka Upanishads, while Volume II treats of Taittireeya, Aitareya and Swetaswatara Upanishads in a similar manner. The ripe experience and practical knowledge of the subject the author possesses enables him to achieve a marvel in literary production which few dare undertake The author has succeeded remarkably well in the interpretation of these Upanishads in a most satisfactory and original manner. Congratulatory messages from distinguished heads of the various departments in Indian Universities have been received by the author hailing this work. This is verily a gift to humanity received from the highest source-Parabrahman only.

Brahma Sutras: Professor P.S. Naidu, MA Ph. D. Education Department, University of Allahabad writes: "The Brahma Sutras are the heart and core of Indian Philosophy. It is said truly that "those who wish to study the Philosophy of Vedanta should study the Ten Classical Upanishads and the 'BrahmaSutras. All the great Acharyas have composed commentaries on the Brahma Sutras and every one tries to support his thesis on the authority of the Brahma Sutras. The numerous commentaries extant are terse, involved and difficult of understanding for one with average intelligence And at the present moment when even scholars tire easily of treatises of moderate difficulty, the terse philosophical works are left untouched The Maharshi has done a distinct service to the cause of philosophy by composing a commentary which is lucid, readable and easy of understanding. The summary and synopsis at the commencement of each section, the free translatic of the Sutras and the lucid commentary tempt the ordinary student to a rare philosophical repast. And when once you taste it, you are sure to come back to the repast with greater appetite. All those interested in spiritual revival in our country are deeply indebted to the Maharshi for bringing out the first two chapters of the Brahma Sutras in an attractive form. Every one will eagerly look forward to the publication of the second part from the pen of one who has endeared himself to every true son of India."

Concentration and Meditation: This is undoubtedly one of the major works of the author. The subject. Matter pertaining to Dhyana-Yoga has been treated with an amazing insight into the intricate details on human psychology in all its bearings. To the student of Yoga striving to realize God the priceless lessons contained in this admirable work are indispensable. Beautifully printed, the book is divided into nine chapters dealing with the theory and practice of concentration, practice of the different kinds of meditation, and the obstacles to meditation, which last chapter is exhaustively treated. It may be conside. Red as a veritable dictionary containing classical lessons to one and all anxious to overcome the dis. Ease of wrong thinking, wrong acting and wrong living which envelops the world in ever-deepening gloom. I commend it to every intelligent man and woman for close study and assimilation so that he or sha may lead a life divine.

World's Religions: The "New Democrat" writes: 'Swami Sivananda is a prolific writer of faith and illumination. He has gifts of clear thinking combined with forceful expression. He has come near God and is in a position to take others that way in all religious intensity. "World's Religions" is a very commendable effort to ask people to be truly religious. It sees no distinction and occasion for difference in the religions of the world. Swami Sivananda wants peace and happiness all over the earth. He is a believer in the merits of rhythm and harmony in the world. In all religions he finds that God is approached through Love, devotion and fellowship. He concentrates on the philosophy behind religions and finds the same philosophy, philosophy of love and truth." A book that is

Intended to unite the followers of one and all the religions of the world into a single fraternity with the ideals of Fatherhood of God and the brother. Hood of man. This is what one expects from a true Vedanti the Maharshi is. Simply grand and wholly elevating.

Vedanta Jyoti: This is indeed a Light on Vedanta as the title signifies. It is a collection of musical tunes suitable for Vedantic meditation, each piece presenting a distinct line of contemplation. Some of the verses transport you to realms of unalloyed felicity and constant chanting of them transfigure you into a divinity.

Yogic Home Exercises: This contains a lucid description of important Yogic postures suitable for both men and women of modern times. The technique for carrying out these exercises is nicely explained in detail and the benefits accruing from each Asana pointed out impressively. There are also valuable chapters on the theoretical knowledge necessary for the maintenance of good health and strength. An elementary knowledge of the human body is also given. Other important chapters deal with sleep, bathing, diet, fasting and the technique of Mudras, Bandhas, Kriyas and Pranayama exercises. The 22 illustrations exemplify and illustrate the text.

All About Hinduism: A book of 260 pages, it includes within its all-embracing sweep every aspect of Hindu life, thought and religion. It brings home the kernel of the Hindu scriptures, explains the Hindu social organization and throws a flood of light on Hindu philosophic systems and religious practices. A priceless treasure for all book-lovers, who are above caste prejudices and religious distinctions. It enables a student to rightly understand the much maligned Hindu Religion with sympathy.

Light, Power and Wisdom: As the name indicates this gem of a book is a key to transport oneself to the realm of Light, Power and Wisdom. Every page is a live source of inspiration and joy. A handy pocket edition worth having as a constant companion.

Bhakti and Sankirtan: It is a book full of divine thoughts and is simply soul-stirring. God-realization through singing of His glories and chanting of His Names is propounded Even the dullest intellect will be moved by the author's lucid and impressive language. It is a boon to humanity at large.

Hindu Fasts and Festivals: The "Hindustan Times," Delhi writes in its review columns: "Hinduism is an ancient and dynamic religion. Festivals of Hindus are qualified by fasts and vigile. There is an old and enduring philosophy behind these observances Swami Sivananda is well-known as the organizer of Divine Life Society and an Ashram at Rishikesh. In the book under review he has detailed Hindu festivals, Jayantis, Melas and Vratas (fasts) and explained the special significance of each. This is the latest, but perhaps not the last of Swamiji's popular publications to guide and upplift the Hindus." Europeans and Americans will find this work highly entertaining and instructive.

Jnana Yoga: No student of Vedanta should fail to read this book. It explains the path of Knowledge briefly and inspires the student to tread the path.

Samadhi Yoga: A most valuable work on the practice of Yoga and the attainment of Samadhi or Super-Conscious state.

Lectures on Yoga and Vedanta: It contains 10 beautiful lectures on Yoga and 35 lectures on Vedanta from a practical and God-realized Sage.

Brahmacharya Drama: This is an inspiring drama in four Acts inculcating the virtues of celibate life preserving a person's vitality and fostering spiritual powers. All young people should make it a point to peruse this little book.

Ethical Teachings: A practical guide to a life of ethical purity and the building up of a strong character which is the sine qua non to success in all our endeavours, be it material or spiritual. Will the educational authorities please consider this book with a view to introduce it in school curricula?

Conversations on Yoga. This is a masterly portrayal of the Science of Yoga and the Philosophy of Vedanta in the form of thrilling dialogues between the Guru and his disciple. The disciple raises all sorts of questions and doubts and the Guru gives clear and lucid answers to them.

Philosophical Stories: The lives and teachings of ancient sages and saints as well as of present-day householders who devoted their lives to religious and spiritual practices are portrayed in a beautiful and attractive manner in the form of 42 stories to show that the Lord whom we worship is residing in the chambers of our hearts and not far away from из. Those stories illustrate that troubles and difficulties are a blessing in disguise.

Japa-Yoga: A useful booklet to these who wish to practise the repetition of sacred syllables or Mantras for attaining Self-realization and all kinda of psychic powers. The technique of repeating the Mantras as well as a list of Mantras are also given. This is a forgotten science and the author's services to revive it deserve notice.

Lord Siva and His Worship: A veritable boon to all lovers of Lord Siva containing a mine of information, valuable and instructive. The methods of coming face to face with Lord Siva are fully explained. It will be found highly useful by all devotees of Lord Siva who are obsessed with various doubts in their daily worship of their deity.

Essence of Bhakti Yoga: The principles governing the practice of Bhakti-Yoga are fully explained The nine modes of devotion, the ways of practising Bhakti and other allied matters are succinctly dealt with. The appendix contains a bunch of songs that transport one to realms of joy and bliss.

Illuminating Stories: Contains a number of interesting stories selected from the sacred books of all religions of the world. It is didactic and each story is intended to teach a particular lesson. An ideal

textbook that should be prescribed in schools and colleges in India with a view to inculcate in the minds of students the fundamental ethical principles of all religions.

World's Religions: A very useful book containing details of the various religions of the world. Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Taoism, Sikhism, Hebrewism and Jainiem are all sympathetically handled with a view to promote sympathy, tolerance and understanding towards the followers of the different religions. No student of religion can afford to be without it and no library is complete without a copy of it on its shelf.-love

Treasure of Teachings: This contains a wealth of advice steeped in experience. The central message of the book is contained in the following words: "The salt of life is selfless service. The bread of life is universal love. The water of life is purity. The sweetness of life is devotion. The fragrance of life is generosity. The pivot of life is meditation. The goal of life is Self-realization." Another textbook for school boys.

What becomes of the soul after death?: A book of absorbing interest to one and all desirous to know what happens to the human soul after 'death' and are eager to conquer death. A vehement answer to the doubting Thomas' on the subject of reincarnation and the law of Karma. It should open the eyes of at least the educated public; both in the East and in the West. An effective dose to right living and tight thinking.

Necessity for Sannyasa: An excellent and unrebuttable answer to the present-day leaders of though in India who have no sympathy for the Order of Sanyasa mostly on account of the impact of Western civilization and the spread of communist principles in the land. The author rightly maintains that Hinduism minus Sannyasa will be a dead religion and that the true greatness of India lies in the spiritual glory of her Mahatmas and Sannyasins who practise and preach the grand tenets of Sanatana Dharma (Eternal Universal Religion). The author's definition of Sannyasa is truly revealing and impressive. In

Wisdom Sparks: An inspiring, delightful and profound work intended to rekindle the understanding and discrimination of humanity that is steeped in utter materialism. It elevates the reader to sublime heights of moral and spiritual splendour and sustains his interest throughout.

Upanishad Drama: It almost seems as if the original seer and propounder of the Upanishads is reincarnate in the person of the Maharshi to reinterpret the gospel of the Upanishads in a manner easily understood by the modern people. The plays can with great advantage be enacted on the stage and the screen and in educational institutions. There can be no doubt that the reader will become a vastly changed man or woman for the better. Every home, school and library should possess a copy of this cheap and great work.

Siva Gita: The only Autobiography in the world in which the entire life and work of a very illumine. Ting personality and dynamic Yogi and Sage are portrayed in 18 short letters in the simplest and most inspiring style It speaks to the fund of resource. Fullness and originality the author has at his beck and call. It is indeed a Bible to millions of his devotes and followers not only in India but in other parts of the world as well.

Ten Upanishads: This is the work that can be attempted by only a fully blown Sage and Yogi having the most intimate relationship with the Absolute Reality or Truth. It stands on a par with any of ten classical Upanishads and is the whole spiritual message the Maharshi has to give us from the depths of his inmost experience and knowledge. It is unbeatable for its originality and conception as well as for the lucidity of style and expression. All the experiences the Maharshi had have been beautifully compressed in terse aphorisms and running commentaries have been added. It is perhaps the greatest literary contribution to the world of thought by the Sage and Superman of the Himalayas. It is very popular among the true spiritual aspirants everywhere.

There are altogether over 200 works to the credit of this giant among writers and it is absolutely impossible to even remember all of them by name.

The following are the Dramas written and actually enacted at his Ashram! (1) Bhagavad Gita (One Act Play) (2) Radha's Prem (3) Divine Life (4) Saint Alavandar (5) Sivananda Vijaya (6) Siva Leelas and a ew others.

He has written as much poetry as prose though much of his poetical compositions remains unknown. The following works have been published. (1) Pushpanjali (2) Sangeeta Lila Yoga (3) Sangeeta Bhagavata (4) Philosophy and Yoga in Poems and (5) vedantaJyoti about which reference has been already made above. His rendering of "Ananda Lahari" of Sri Sankaracharya into simple English together with exhaustive commentary speaks to his profound scholarship.

The following booklets and pamphlets from the pen of the Maharshi have been printed and distributed free of cost to several lakshs of spiritually. Inclined souls in India and abroad!

1. Atma Bodha
2. Tattwa Bodha
3. Memory Culture
4. Way to Peace and Bliss
5. Sannyasins, Wake Up!
6. Conquest of Anger and Passion
7. Instructions to Aspirants,
8. Happiness is Within
9. Practice of Japa-Yoga
10. Siva Jnanamarita Upanishad
11. Isa Vasya upanishad
12. Sankirtan Movement
13. Select Spiritual Gems
14. Bhaja Govindam
15. Meditation on Gayatri
16. Control of Evil Habite
17. Atma Jnana Made Easy
18. Yoga for Health
19. Vichara Bindu Upanishad
20. Ananda Bindu Upanishad
21. Adwaitamrita Upanishad
22. Vedantasara Upanishad
23. Practice of Brahmacharya
24. Path of Renunciation
25. Stotra Mala
26. Vedanta and Freedom
27. God, Man and Religion
28. Inner Yogic Discipline
29. Yoga and its Objects
30. Essays on Yoga
31. The Path of Vedanta
32. Brahmanubhava Upanishad

33. Spiritual Flowers
34. Bhakti and Prablada
35. Advice to Householders
36. Swaroopabodha Upanishad
37. Brahma Rahasaya Upanishad
38. Raja-Yoga
39. Prema Yoga (Yoga of Love)
40. Dhyana Yoga, I
41. Yoga of Right Conduct
42. Instructions for Aspirants
43. Stree Dharma
44. Glory of Sankirtan
45. Practical Vedanta
46. Ahimsa, Satya, Brahmacharya
47. Inspiring Songs. I
48. Mokaba Gita
49. Gospel of Love
50. Atma Swarajya
51. Religion and Philosophy
52. Bhagavad Gita (6 Parts of 3 chapters each)
53. Self-Realization
54. Jnana Yoga
55. Yoga
56. Yoga of Devotion
57. Importance of Brahmacharya
58. Science of Reality
59. Vairagya Mala
60. Inspiring Letters
61. Ladder of Yoga.
62. Dhyana-Yoga, II
63. Karma-Yoga
64. Inspiring Songs, II
65. Inspiring Songs, III
66. Akhanda Kirtan
67. Sadhana for householders
68. 68 Glory of Brahmacharya
69. A Dialogue Between a Theist and an Atheist.
70. Inspiring Songs, IV
71. God-realization for Householders
72. Divine Life
73. Yogasara Upanishad.
74. Jyotirbindu Upanishad

Several thousand of copies running into several editions were printed and distributed just for the asking everywhere in India. They are all now out stock. Many of his works have been translated into several lndian vernaculars such as Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu, while a few of them have appeared in foreign languages such as French and German

Saint Sivananda runs and edits six journals in addition to his laborious daily routine. The "DIVINE LIFE" is a monthly magazine of light and learning with pure religious ideals It has won popularity and is on an equal footing with similar monthly journals in India. It has several thousands of regular subscribers both in India and in other countries of the world. The 'WISDOM LIGHT" is a free monthly journal given to every regular member of the DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY of which the Maharshi is the Founder-President. "YOGA VEDANTA FOREST UNIVERSITY WEEKLY is growing in importance and attracting a large number of patrons and subscribers.

His personality and lustre has attracted a number of learned scholars and others to write hs biograhy portraying his life and works from different angles, each looking at him through a particular lens

It should be now clear to every reader the tremendous amount of work put forth by a single individual. It should also be obvious that none but a veritable Superman could have undertaken and succeeded so well in such an enterprise. Is there another spiritual figure in any part of the world who stands on an equal footing with the hero of this book, considered from any point of view?

CHAPTER X

SIXTEEN RAYS OF SIVANANDA

"Thou seemest human and divine, The highest, holiest manhood, Thou."
-Tennyson

Like Lord Buddha, the Maharshi is a happy fusion of sixteen divine rays that go to make up a wholly pleasing and most lovable personality sending forth on all sides scintillating rays of spiritual magnetism, irresistible charm and beauty. An exacting moralist like Mahatma Gandhi, a grand mystical poet like Tulsidas, a Mahayogi and Jeevanmukta like Sri Sankaracharya, a brilliant orator like Rama Tirtha, an all conquering psychologist at whose feet Frued and Jung should sit to learn their first lessons in the science, a quiet but powerful educationist who works on an international field, a wise propagandist, an indefatigable social reformer, a sound organizer, a great divine giver, a remarkable God-man and mystic, an expert dramatist who can superbly dramatize anything to a produce moral or spiritual effect, a charming dancer (Nritya-kalaa-kushala) whose dances throw us into intense spiritual trances, a triple-crowned Doctor of of body, mind and soul, an enthusiastic Yogic physical culturist and above all, a great World Teacher who stands on a par with Buddha, Jesus, Krishna or Sankaracharya possessing and dissemina. Ting the highest wisdom and the grandest philoso. Phy of lite, Maharshi Sivananda is undoubtedly a unique world-figure who lives to love, to bless and to pray for his fellow-men.

(1) Moralist: Truth, Purity and Love pulsate in every cell and inch of his being. Virtue is his very life-blood. Humility and gentleness adorn his features. He is perhaps the most harmless creature living on the face of the earth. Truth is inseparable from this Superman. He thinks the truth, he speaks the truth, he writes the truth and, needless to say, he meditates in and on the Truth. His life provides a striking illustration of service and sacrifice at the altar of Truth. He loves to give and abhors to receive He is an embodiment of simple living and high thinking. He has taken innumerable sacred vows in his post-renunciation years and remains pledged to them. If it is possible for any one to be established unshakably on the pedestal of Virtue or Dharma, Maharshi Sivananda has achieved this herculean feat to the point of perfection. He is never tired of repeating again and again that the development of one virtue to its maximum limits automatically breeds and germinates countless other virtues in man. He is an object-lesson in the practice of universal love. It is thrilling and ennobling to see him manifesting divine love towards even the man who has injured him. He faithfully sticks to the moral and ethical principles propounded in the BhagavadGita or the Sermon on the Mount He teaches more through example In short, righteousness is the living background of all his movements and activities I have no hesitation in styling him a giant-moralist. If there lives a man who enjoys the bliss of Dharma-megha-samadhi (Superconsciousness born of virtues clouding a person's being), it is Sage Sivananda, it is Saint Sivananda, it is Yogi Sivananda.

(2) Poet: He is a real poet in every sense of the term. He sings all his spiritual experiences in simple lyrical verses. His poems are full of authority, vigour, power, insight, illumination, sacredness and wisdom. The style is simple, natural graceful, eloquent, deep and sonorous. He is full when he sings. He has an abundance of material and knowledge to draw from. He is tossed joyously hither and thither by waves of Ananda as he sings his tunes or composes them. Great truthe rush forth in strong currents and find an outlet in

simple arresting words and forms of expression. There is a peculiar melody all his own in every line of his innumerable poems. He takes full poetical licence. He does not want to labour in his poetical compositions. He rids himself of the usual shackles of rhyme rhythm or metre. He sings as naturally as he talks. You feel inspired, elevated and hypnotized. You begin to adore, to revere and to salute him. You feel you are in the immediate presence of a mighty spiritual dynamo, a very great MAN, who seems to possess all the Wisdom and Knowledge of the Goddess of Learning. He can versify anything. He can sing the whole of the epic poems like Ramayana or Maha bharata in ten or twelve lines producing the same effect as did their original authors. He sings in deep emotion, joy and ecstasy. He cares not what effect his songs produce on the hearers' minds. He seems to sing for himself, for his own spiritual entertain. Ment and pleasure. The object of his poems is to spiritualize our thoughts and activities. He succeeds in his objective in a more than ample measure. Did not the sages of yore write all the sacred books of India like Upanishads and Bhagavad-Gita in poetical lines? Swami Sivananda follows their sacred example often and loves to walk in their footsteps.

(3) Mahayogi and Jeevanmukta: He is first and foremost a Mahayogi and Jeevanmukta enthroned in Yoga. Having attained onenes8 with the One Indivisible Self of all beings, he performs actions in the true spirit of a blemishless Karma-Yogi like Janaka and Krishna as offerings at the feet of Supreme, regardless of their fruits. Being perfectly desireless, he aims at nothing, he has no axe to grind, for he wants nothing for himself. He sees the One in all and all in One. He is a living Jeevanmukta who has attained the goal of life. He radiates Joy, Peace and Wisdom. He is a veritable Light to the whole world. He is a Superman, a mighty Yogi, a dynamic spiritual Hero and Conqueror. Blessed is the man who comes in direct contact with him. His mere presence will suffice to consume all sins to holy ashes. Those who live in constant company with him are potential gods and angels only, with brilliant spiritual future staring them in their faces. His inner state is a fathomless mystery. How gracious and kind the Almighty Being is to depute the Maharshi to this world! How fortunate in India particularly in being sanctified by the foot-marks of this extraordinary Jeevanmuktal Indeed what a great misfortune it is to live as a contemporary of this best among men and not to know him. What is greatness, if Sivananda is not great? What is perfection, if he is not perfect? What is spirituality if he is not the embodiment of spirituality? What is Yoga, if he is not a Yogi of the highest imaginable order? In his great nature and intense experience we see our own spiritual struggles and aspirations transfigured and from his salvation we gather hope of our own. He looks resplendent like the scintillating Kaala Megha and his eyes emit rays of love and grace. He has attained serenity of mind through austerities of various sorts and is passionately devoted to the practice of righteousness. He stands on a par with Bhrigu, Kanada, Kapila, Garga and Vasishtha as an adept in virtue, self-control and Yoga No euology or encomium is too high for him, for he has transcended all these. He shines forth in his immaculate glory and holy spirituality with a glorious halo of light playing around his face and crown and himself glows forth like heated gold in all its purity. Often in the brilliance of this glory one misses to see the human aspect of his personality. His countenance always beams with unspeakable joy blended with a solemn serenity all his own. He is pure hearted and possesses divine knowledge He is sinless and the best of Yogins in modern times. His mind is thoroughly and perpetually lit up by the divine consciousness and he sees all beings in his own Self. He is the embodiment of nectar He sees Atman alone everywhere, on all sides He is the incomparable possesssor of Yoga

and Knowledgea rare combination He is truly a philosopher. He is all that is deemed divine, godly, pure and great. He is beyond delusion. He is indeed a rare ascetic. The Pranava Nada vibrates in his heart and about his being with an unusual intensity and force. You cannot possibly entertain an impure idea or thought in his divine presence resence You are completely under his divine spell. You definitely lose your sense of individuality. Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra and other gods seem mighty delighted and pleased with him. He filled himself with righteousness by worship of Ganesha. He conquered all evil forces by worship of Skanda. Bounteous prosperity and wealth roll about his feet through the grace of Lakshmi. He obtained eloquence and knowledge and wisdom by the good grace of Goddess Saraswati. He obtained all that is fit to be obtained by the grace of the Universal Mother, Goddess Parvati.

(4) Creator: Swami Sivananda is a divine speaker and orator When he ascends the platform to speak, you begin to feel and see in him a holy sage of uncommon purity, austerity and realization. There he stands, a huge human dynamo, serene and tranquil, gazing at his audience from end to end, and creating the impression in everyone's mind that the speaker is particularly looking at him or her The magic of his personality diaws and holds the attention of one and all to the very last. He first invokes the highest power, the Parabrahman, and draws all his power, inspiration and material from Him by the loud chanting of the monosyllable OM in a vibrant tone that fills the hall and the minds of his hearers with purity and divinity. The entire atmosphere is pleasantly but divinely shaken and the ground is prepared for what is next to come. He speaks extempore He speaks King's English, after the manner of the Bible and the Upanishads He starts in a simple, homely, conversational style and utters every word in a deep sonorous voice that rings in the ears of the masses and the classes gathered around him. His voice is silvery, clear and audible to one and all. He is a rhetorician. He punctuates wherever needed with suitable pauses, smiles or derisive laughs with a view to produce the needed psychological effect. He wins the hearts of thousands at a single gathering by appealing to their commonsense, emotion and reason. People look at him in wonder and amazement and sit transfigured. His thundering voice, his graceful gesticulations, his fiery looks, his impassioned appeals, his vast erudition, his spiritual realization and mental powers coupled with the powerful vibrations emanating from his holy and sacred personality produce a deep and ineradicable effect upon the heaters. As a preacher and exponent of Vedanta and practical universal religion he is a master-builder of doctrine second to none of his con. Temporaries. He speaks to every generation of men and women and is heard and heeded by the best of them. He has an ocean of knowledge to empty out and finds his physical frame an impediment and an obstacle to do it. He wants to speak and to teach unceasingly like an impetuous torrent or a tempestuous storm and convey all that he knows to every one of his fellow-men. He becomes completely exhausted physically, mentally and spiritually too after an oration, and takes lot of time and nursing to regain his normalcy. He has turned atheists into theists, non-believers into believers and scoffers into ardent devotees.

(5) Psychologist: Laborious and patient practice of Raja Yoga for long years has made the Swami a practical psychologist. If anything, he is first and foremost a wonderful psychologist, who understands the tendencies and intricacies of the human mind and knows appropriate methods of training and subduing it. Yoga aims at the conquest of the mind, which alone can make the human being peaceful and happy Strenuous practice of austerities and Yoga for over 15 years has enabled him to achieve this enviable conquest

of mind and made him a Yogi of the highest order. His books, Mind, Its Mysteries and Control" and "Sure Ways for Success in Lifeand God-Realization" clearly reveal his rare grasp and mastery of the elusive mind and depth of experience. His own success in life is in no small measure due to his being a super-psychologist. He can tackle anybody and win the hearts of even his adversaries. He can influence anyone and all types of people. Without a single copper in his hands he has been able to found the Divine Life Society with countless branches all over the world and influence millions of people by ministering to their spiritual needs. Being in perfect tune and harmony with the Supreme Self and the Universal Mind, he is able to receive the thought-vibrations and thought currents generated in the minds of others in his own mental-radio and respond to these vibrations accordingly; for the minds of others are to him so many transparent mirrors and he clearly sees what each person is and where he stands. He reads our thought and behaves accordingly. He sees clairvoyantly what is happening to a particular branch of the Divine Life Society in San Francisco or Copenhagen and how it is functioning and what are its needs and corresponds with its heads suitably. People are taken aback. He gives you unasked what you want from him. He clears your doubts of his own accord, without your questioning or talking. Extraordinary mental powers, aren't they?

(6) Educationist: Sage Sivananda is a wonderful educationist who believes in silent and constructive work. He is convinced that all the ills of the world could be reduced to the irreducible minimum, if our young boys and girls are given a sound and liberal education all over the world He lays stress on ethical culture and character-building in the rising generation of boys and girls. He is convinced that aducation only. And until this good world is established the good citizen cannot be produced and vice versa This war-mentality, this aggressionmentality, this law of the jungle where the fittest alone can hope to survive and all others should perish is not becoming of man. Whence did this originate? Who is at the helm of all these non. Sense? It is wrong to blame a Hitler, a Mussolini, a Truman, a Churchill a Stalin or Atlee. No, that is not quite correct. Every one of us in the world is directly or indirectly responsible for the above sins, as we are all the products of a ruinous system of education If this diagnosis is correct, then the disease should be tackled at the root. Then alone there is the prospect of peace on earth and goodwill amongst men. The Maharshi is labouring to produce an international consciousness of our faults an our shortcomings and showing proper remedial methods to overcome them.

(7) Propagandist: This is an age of propaganda and publicity. Unless one utilizes these means wisely and intelligently, one can never attract the attention of the people. In this age of dark materialism, spirituality is the last subject in which people seem to be interested. They have many other important things to do. In order to convince the people of the high value and utility of spiritual things so that they may desist from their usual habits and take to spirituality earnestly, considerable effective propaganda is absolutely essential. Otherwise people have no inclination to heed to their scriptures or their sages. To make them believe that God does exist, a big man with a big physical body with an undoubted national or international reputation must speak to them in the proper way and through proper mediums. The Maharshi was quick to realize this astonishing phenomenon and dexterously utilizes his vast prestige and international reputation to create a firm belief in God in the minds of one and all. He writes books, pamphlets and leaflets; he sends messages to various associations: organizations and religious and spiritual conferences; he edits a number or journals; he sings on the gramophone recorde

thrilling tunes and delivers inspiring speeches; he dumps his literature on the tables of willing people often unasked. Every important man who counts in some way or other not only in India but in every important country in the world must have received autographed works of the Maharshi by the dozens. And I have little doubt that they all must have perused the pages of these works sometime in their moments of leisure and realized the tremendous importance and value of the work he is doing. Many of them. I dare say, must have in their better moments realized how true the words of the Maharshi are and how worthwhile it would be to translate them in their own daily lives! More than one third of the Sage's works are offered gratis to people. The Maharshi knows what book is suitable to whom; and he sends just that book to the person. Many great leaders and savants are unconsciously moulded imperceptibly and made to develop faith in God and things moral and spiritual. He is verily the author of a Spiritual and Religious Renaissance all over India and in some other parts of the world. And as a propagandist he easily excels his predecessors like Swami Vivekananda and Swami Dayananda in the field. His services to the cause of religion, Vedanta and synthetic practice of spirituality can hardly be ever rightly estimated. It looks as though some great ancient Seer of the Upanishadic period like Kapila, Vyasa or Yajnavalkya is reborn in the person of this distinguished Sage and Seer of modern times to give the right impetus to the dying and decaying religions of the world and particularly Hinduism and Vedanta which are being eclipsed by the dark clouds of ignorance and materialism and which orce dead can never hope to take its proper place in the hearts and minds of the people of this world in the foreseeable future. It is in this sense that I consider him. As verily an incarnation of God Himself.

(8) Social Reformer: Maharshi Sivananda is a bold social reformer. He has little sympathy with the present-day framework of society. He pities the cultural life of individuals and nations He is the leader of a world-wide movement that works for the thorough overhauling and reconstruction of society on the bedrock of morality and religion He is indignant with war-mongers, bloodshed, communal strife, national jealousies and international animosities. Being a true Vedanti, he wants one world, one government, one flag, one parliament, une religion and an unified human race. He pleads for a new understanding or awakening and a new system of education to remodel the entire humanity. He wants every man, woman, boy, girl, teacher, doctor, lawyer, businessman, industrialist, capitalist, head of administration, minister, politician, and in fact one and all to unlearn all that he has learnt and to begin life anew This new life will be based on moral and spiritual laws, all-embracing internationalism, tolerance, brotherhood, love, peace and harmony. He condemns downright such social evils as gambling, horse-racing, Emoking, meat-eating, drinking of spiritous liquor, prostitution, early marriage, dowry system, birth-control, cinemas, corruption, bribery and black-marketing and exhorts all those responsible for the efficient administration of the various countries of the world to take drastic steps to eradicate these banes of society without fear or mercy.

He realizes that all our present-day ills are due to an erroneous system of education, which requires urgent and drastic changes. Moral and spiritual sciences should be given due stress in any new system of education that may be introduced. He is quite in favour of imparting higher education to girls, but co-education in the higher stages should be abandoned. The aim of imparting education to girls is to make them ideal mothers who will be able to bring forth ideal citizens of the world. Girls are not to become barristers,

ministers, ambassadors, magistrates and politicians. He wants every girl to possess exemplary character like Sita, Damayanti, Anasuya and Draupadi, and exalt womanhood to the heights of divine perfection. He has no sympathy with the modern Eve who apes her western sister foolishly. He is against the principle of divorce and the Hindu Code Bill now on the anvil in the Indian Parliament.

He has irrevocable faith in the division of society into castes for the harmonious working of society. It is a pity that modern politics has rudely and violently shaken and shattered the grand edifice of the caste-system based on immemorial spiritual and moral traditions. The four stages of life, viz, Brahmachari, Grahastha, Vanaprastha and Sannyasi so wisely conceived by our ancient seers should begin to function as ever before. He exhorts students to concentrate on the harmonious development of body, mind and soul. The student should lead a life of perfect celibacy until his 25th year and acquire proficiency in arts and sciences in universities. He should then choose a girl of suitable health, education and temperament and marry. He should lead an ideal householder's life in accordance with the laws laid down in the scriptures. He should live a simple life and practise virtue.

Sivananda's works "Students' Success in Life", "Advice to Women", "Stree Dharma", "Practice of Brahmacharya" and "Ethical Teachings" are his unique gifts to the present-day society. They expose the pitfalls of the modern age and offer suitable means and methods of overcoming them.

(9) Organizer: Saint Sivananda is an indefatigable worker and a sound organizer. He has a dynamic personality, sound practical commonsense, ability to influence people and win the hearts of others, strong will-power, presence of mind, dexterity in the organization and management of institutions, capacity for quick decision, alacrity, pushing nature, drive, energy, application to work, industry, perseverance, adaptability, endurance, self-reliance, unflinching faith and trust in his disciples and lieutenants, perfect judgment and clear vision. In his extremely inspiring autobiography entitled "Siva Gita" he writes, "I know well how to extract work from others. I extract work through kindness, service, respect and love." Above all, his success in life as an organizer is due to his complete resignation and surrender to the Will of the Divine, purity of thought and ideals, a burning passion to serve the Divine in Humanity, universal love and complete indifference to wealth. Perhaps his one weakness as an organizer and head of a big responsible institution is his utter carelessness in matters pertaining to finance. It looks as though Kubera himself is his Finance Minister; for whenever a seeming financial crisis threatens, the Maharshi comes out of it unscathed, and with the most unexpected success.

The Maharshi's monumental bequest to posterity is the now famous Divine Life Society with its headquarters in Rishikesh, Himalayas. Founded in 1936 with the lofty ideals of Truth, Wisdom and Yoga, the Society today functions vigorously through its 200 branches scattered in different parts of India and over a dozen branches in foreign lands like England, France, Germany, Switzerland, Holland, Bulgaria, Denmark, U.S.A., South Africa, Rurma and Australia. The Maharshi maintains a perpetual contact with all these branches and through them with the thousands of enthusiastic spiritual aspirants through the medium of a regular system of correspondence as well as through four important

journals, viz., The Divine Life, Wisdom Light, the Yoga Vedanta Forest University Weekly and the Health and Long Life.

He has also founded an ideal Ashram called the Sivanandashram at Rishikesh. It is a unique institution of its kind where over 150 inmates permanently reside under the fatherly care of the Sage himself, These holy inmates learn and practise Synthetic Yoga of which the Maharshi is the most celebrated exponent in modern times. This Ashram provides all facilities to really earnest and deserving aspirants desirous of treading the sharp razor-edged path of spirituality. It has during the last ten years attracted the choicest of Indian youth with strong spiritual potentialities. Hundreds upon hundreds of them have had the unique privilege of staying here and assimilating the secrets of Yoga and Vedanta under the august and personal supervision and guidance of the Maharshi himself. This Ashram is certainly a standing monument to the extraordinary genius of its venerable Founder. The chief features of the Ashram are the Yoga Vedanta Forest University, the Viswanath Shrine, the Sivananda Charitable Dispensary, the Sivananda Publication League, the Siva. Nanda Ayurvedic Pharmacy, the Sivananda Library, the Yoga Museum and the Sivananda Primary School. It is, of course, not possible to dwell at length upon the admirable work and the tremendous volume of service this Ashram puts forth in the direction of the spiritual regeneration and reawakening of the world in general and of India in particular. I have no hesitation, therefore, in saying that this is the best Ashram in the whole of India that is being run on highly enlightened lines where ample opportunities are afforded to one and all for their spiritual Sadhana and unfoldment.

With a view to co-ordinate the different religions of the world through reconciliation of the superficial differences, elimination of minor disputes and establishment of one Universal Religion of "God and Man 'and "God in Man", the Maharshi has immortalized himself by establishing in December 1945 "The all World Religions' Federation" with its grand motto of "Unity for Perfection'. It aims at uniting all faiths, cults, creeds and religions by synthesizing the teachings of the saints, sages and prophets of all religions. The Maharshi's impressive book "World's Religions" written and published in 1946 goes far in promoting goodwill and universal brotherhood amongst the followers of one and all the religions of the world. With the goodwill, co-operation and sympathy of religious leaders of different denominations and father and also the multi-millionaires and wealthy persons of the world, the Maharshi feels certain that the "ALL WORLD RELIGIONS' FEDERATION" will achieve its cherished object. May I appeal to all top-ranking leaders of the world in the political, social, economic, religious and other fields to get together and devise ways and means of eschewing war and bloodshed for ever and ever by ushering in a Federation of the World through a Federation of all the Religions of the World so wisely conceived by Maharshi Sivananda? It is the grand philosophy of Vedanta that can save the world from further des. Truction and disruption. Will the different nations of the world pay due heed to the mighty call of the Superman of the Himalayas? Will they all bury their differences and co-operate in the sublime task of establishing 'heaven on earth'? Upon the answer to these crucial questions will depend the future of the world.

(10) Giver: The Maharshi is an embodiment of charity and generosity. He is indeed the Karna or Kubera of the twentieth century. He gives with both hands, without any distinction of caste, creed or colour. Every pie the Ashram receives from its donors is

spent away in the service of the poor, the sick and the needy. He runs a free feeding house where about two hundred Sannyasins, Mahatmas and other religious mendicants are being fed twice a day. And given clothing and shelter. His is a life of unceasing and tireless sacrifice and service. He takes infinite delight in giving whatever a person wants. He bestows special care on genuine Yogic students and provides every kind of facility to them. Whenever some devotee or casual visitor to the Ashram brings some fruits or other presents for the Maharshi, the latter at once distributes everything amongst those present at the spot, keeping nothing for himself. His charities and charitable disposition are proverbial in Rishikesh. Even his books and other costly publications are given away free of cost to those who need them. Thousands of rupees worth of books and medicines are being distributed every year by the Sivananda Publication League and Sivananda Charitable Dispensary attached to the Ashram.

The Bible exhorts, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand does." The Maharshi translates this excellent precept literally into his practice. Though the Sivanandashram and the various institutions attached to it are deriving lakhs of rupees by way of income every year, yet the Maharshi lives like a true Sannyasi. He lives a simple life and wants nothing for himself. He is perfectly content with his loin-cloth and his Kamandalu. He depends upon Him only every moment of his life. He lives in the eternal present and never bothers himself about tomorrow or the day-after. Every day at the Ashram is a day of festivity or some celebration or other. He takes immense delight in distributing laddus with an angelic smile playing upon his mien. He offers scholarship to deserving students, buys books for some others and offers protection and shelter to those who take refuge in him. Oh, how guileless, how simple, how pure, how magnanimous he is!

(11) God-Man: Maharshi Sivananda is a remark. Able God man and mystic. He is God-intoxicated and lives in a world of his own. He sings in joy and ecstasy. He prostrates at the feet of all. The Name of Siva is ever throbbing in the lotus of his heart in mystical vibrations. His eyes proclaim the glory, the grandeur and the beauty of his Soul. They dazzle with fire and lustre. He has a good, pure and shining heart. He perceives things by his own eyes and knows things by his own knowledge. He loves all; he serves all; he is kind to all. He is full of the Lord's Happiness and is ever in communion with Him. He is sheltered and safe in the Love of the Lord, and so he is ever in the right and never strays away from the Path of Righteousness. Every one can smell the sweet aroma of his gentle soul. It is sweeter than honey or attar or the finest perfumes from Paris A strange thrill passes through your frame in his glorious presence. The witchery of his personality, the loftiness and the incommunicable beauty of his soul hold you in thrall, and you stand before him in speechless silence, amazed and de. Lighted You feel that the earth which encircles you like a dreamland is an invitation into boundless space and an unfailing guide into eternity. You begin to see within you the dawn of a new era, a mighty event in the long and weary history of your soul. It is no hallucination or an odd trick of your senses It rends asunder the veil of ignorance and gives you a glimpse of the inner world of reality. In vacant or in pensive mood, it again and again flashes across your mind and on your inward eye, and often your heart wanders to Ananda Kutir, where you caught the first glimmer of the splendour of your soul within. This is not the enviable privilege of a few chosen ones, but the birthright of all those who approach him with purified hearts.

Only in rare moments of our life do we hear the whispers of the Unseen. The heroic form of the Maharshi comes floating before our mind's eye. He sings, "Aham Brahmasmi! Tat

Twam Asi!" He sings of the dawn, while the rest of the world is enveloped in inky darkness. He has a profound faith in the ultimate destiny of man and in unmistakable tone and authority declares that we are all tending to

"One far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves."

In him we have our guide, solace and illumination. He is lost in ecstasy and rapturous devotion to the Feet of the Lord. But we must be soldiers of Truth and servants of God, if we want immediate illumina tion from him He is indeed a rare flower of Indian culture and humanity at large.

Mysticism is an indescribable and thrilling experience. It is a thing to be felt and enjoyed than expressed. Who can possibly describe the gentle smile which plays around the baby's lips or the soft perfume of a flower that fills the evening air? Mysticism is not associated with secrecy or mystery as is generally mistakenly supposed. It is neither spiritualism nor occultism. It is neither an aberration of the mind nor a sort of self-delusion. It is the grand fulfilment of reason, or "reason in her most exalted mood." It is neither a temper nor an attitude of mind It is the total transfiguration of our personality. It is the resurrection to a new life. It is being cast in the very Image of the Maker. It is becoming the Maker Himself

Mysticism is the art of establishing one's conscious relation with the Absolute It is the Science of Reality. It is the scholastic of the heart and the dialectic of the feelings. It is the complete union of the individual soul with the Over-Soul. It is a gigantic adventure into the realms of the unknown. It is Jove nodding unto Jove. It is Deep calling unto Deep. It is the flight of the Alone to the Alone.

The Maharshis's writings breathe a consuming passion for God. The voice we hear is the voice which breathed through the Saiva Saints of the South, Tukkaram, Kabir, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu of Bengal and Thayumanavar. He speaks the language of the mystics, for his message comes from the same country. He is verily the Morning Star of the Bhakti Movement in India in the present century.

He is keenly alive to the undying Spark within him. He knows he is deathless and so he sports with time. He defies time and death in his songs Nachiketas-like he learns from death itself the secrets of Life. Markandeya-like he has set at naught the behests of death and has made a servant of it. It is death that is dead before the might of the mystic Maharshi. He is fearless and sublime in all his utterances. They emanate from a deep-rooted conviction that there was not a time when he was out and that there shall never be a time when he shall cease to be He makes us understand with what godlike eyes he looks on all of us from the vast inner sea of beauty. He finds a world in a grain of sand and a heaven in a molecule.

To him all things are pure and perfect. The world is a fair and a festival to him. He sees everything bathing in the light of the divine. The entire creation speaks to him in songs and lovely pictures. What we want is more eyes and more ears to understand him!

He has the perception of the underlying unity of all existence. He speaks of the music of the spheres and the stars. The sunrise, the sunset, the the morning, the evening, the day, the night, the waxing and the waning moon, the millions of stars and planets careering through their silent courses, the waves of the sea and the rumbling of the wind dancing to the tune of an unheard melody-all these suggest to him that there is some design of an unknown Architect in all the marvels of creation. In the memorable words of Sir Oliver Lodge, "We are impressed with the constant activity of some beneficent power."

The message of the Maharshi is the self-same message of the Sages and Seers of the Upanishada. All the things he sees around him are but the mani festations of one energy. When this energy breathes through men's intellect, it is genius. When it breathes through his will, it is virtue. When it flows through his affection, it is love. The Maharabi has actually felt and experienced that in unity there is life and joy and that in separation there is delusion and death. To him the world is not merely a store. House of power, but a habitation of man's spirit with its eternal music of beauty and its inner light of the divine presence. He interprets the unity of life in his own inimitable style. The world is to him but one family. We are sons and daughters living under one common roof. God is our Father and Mother Do we not feel sometimes the life-throb of the world coursing through our blood and the beating in our hearts? What we feel in a mild degree, the Maharshi feels intensely and every moment of his life.

He is really a beautiful and a most lovable soul. He laughs, in GK. Chesterson's words, with such laughter as shakes the stars. All the tribulations and miseries of the world dare not shake his faith in the final triumph of man. He hears even in the hideous cries of the bottomless pit the diapason of the universal song He identifies himself with the sights and sounds of life. He wanders with the clouds, soars with the hills, dances with the waves, and laughs with the flowers. He walks with the lowliest and the lost. He groans in spirit with those who wail in sorrow, and shakes the burden of those who sweat and toil. He does not ask the wounded person how he feels, but himself becomes the wounded person. He knows he cannot stir a flower without troubling the stars He distinctly feels that an apple falling from a tres rouses powers that shall change the motion of Orion and vex the dreaming of a thousand stars. He is fully alive to the one unbroken stream of life that runs through the whole creation and dances in rhythmic measures He feels that the life that throbs in the cavity of his heart is the self same life that is rocked in the ocean cradle of birth and death. He has lost his life and found a greater life through which the creator of all world speaks He is drunk and saturated with His Presence and so every human being, nay every animal or insect is Vasudeva to him.

(12) Dramatist: The Maharshi is an expert dramatist He showed signs of histrionic talents very early in his life When Shakespeare's "Mid Summer Night's Dream" was staged in his school, young Kuppuswami played the part of Helena with commendable skill and elegance that elicited encomiums and applause from one and all. As a religious leader, public speaker and writer, he was quick to realize the high educative value of the stage and the tremendous fascination it has for the masses and the classes alike. He soon wrote a number of short but brilliant religious dramas calculated to produce deep moral and spiritual effect on the public. These dramas have been often enacted in different parts of India in schools and colleges on important occasions with inestimable results. His "Brahmacharya drama" is an original masterpiece in conception and acting. It is a thrilling and ennobling drama most admirably suited for our modern boys and girls presenting the ideal of celibacy for the grand achievement of temporal as well as spiritual goals. "Saint Alavandar" is an inspiring play in Three Acts that depicts the life of an Indian King who found no real peace and happiness in mundane pleasures but only in a life of perfect renunciation, devotion and dadication to the Feet of the Lord. It reveals the hollowness of worldly life and the sanctity of spiritual life. Next in importance comes "Siva Leelas". It is an ocean of joy and bliss. Based on the mythological Siva Purana, it deals with the worship of Lord Siva and His Divine Sports and instils in the minds of the audience unadulterated devotion to Him as the be all and end-all of life. Written in His

characteristic and inimitable style it is bound to make the divine flame in our hearts burn brighter and creates in us a real taste for the sacred Name of Lord Siva. Devotees of Lord Siva will find this drama highly entertaining and full of the glory of Lord Siva. In "Radha's Prem" a powerful and most convincing answer to disbelievers and perverted intellects who see stark immorality in the Rasa Leelas of Lord Krishna with the Gopis is given. The philosophy underlying Lord Krishna's relationship with the Gopis is clearly brought out with a view to produce the required effect. "Divine Life" is another simple but beautiful drama in Four Acts. It exhorts humanity to cherish an ideal in life and strive for salvation through knowledge and devotion It presents the ideal of a life in the Divine. In "Bhagavad Gita" is presented the different paths of Yoga and the value of the Bhagavad Gita itself as an ideal answer to all our problems of life.

(13) Nritya-Kala Kushala (Dancer): How many of you are aware that Maharshi Sivananda is also an expert dancer (Nritya-Kala Kushala)? Not a ball-room dancer, but a Divine Dancer whose thrilling poses throw us into ecstatic states. Yes, he can dance or assume a pose exactly like Lord Krishna with flute in hands or like Lord Siva with damaru producing the Pranavanada at the end of the world. The same bewitching smile associated with Lord Krishna's face is seen on the face of the Maharshi too. The same bodily curves that Lord Krishna produces while standing underneath the Kadamba tree illustrative and indicative of the profoundest philosophies can be unerringly reproduced by the Maharshi also with the equal grace and effect. The waves of his hands, the deep expressions on his face, the steadiness of his gaze, the quick movements of his limbs, the perfect and blemishless mastery and control he has over every part and limb of his body reveal an astonishing degree of perfection in the divine art of Nritya-Kala. As he dances, he totally forgets himself. He is filled with the purest and deepest emotions, joy and divinity. He seems to feel he is Lord Krishna or Lord Siva Himself and acts as such. Those who look on him dumbfounded are filled with unspeakable joy and bliss. They feel they are in the immediate presence of the Lord Himself. When, how and from whom did the Maharshi acquire this supreme art of Nritya Kala is a mystery!

(14) Doctor: The Maharshi is a triple-crowned Doctor of body, mind and soul, who lays stress on the complete and harmonious development of the human personality. He has no sympathy with the advocates of one-sided human development. To him the development of the body, mind, heart, intellect and soul are all equally essential and vital. He looks upon the human body as a veritable temple of God, the nine-gated city of the Paramatman who dwells within the hearts of all He wants the human body to be preserved in a very pure state of fitness and blooming health and strength for the noble purpose of being utilized in the service of the Lord and humanity and in the achievement of the final goal of life, viz., Self-realization. Nothing should, there. Fore, be done by man to contaminate or pollute its holy and sacred precincts. The human body can be kept pure and in perfect health by observing the laws of health and hygiene and living a natural life of seli-control, self restraint and devotion to Sel. Knowledge.

As a professional doctor both in his pre-renunciation as well as in his post renunciation years, he threw himself heart and soul in alleviating the pains and sufferings to which humanity is subject in a sublime spirit of dedication and service vice He takes infinite delight in nursing the sick and the ailing in comforting them and cheering up their spirits and restoring them to their normal states of health. His very presence is a source of solace and joy to the patients. His heart melts like butter at the sight of a sick or diseased soul

and he becomes very impatient and inspired to do something or other to relieve him of his pain and agony and make him smile. He is a divine healer in essence. A patient who comes to him for treatment never dies as a general rule. He is a staunch advocate of Ayurveda and Naturopathy for the treatment of all kinds. Diseases. His brilliant work, "FAMILY DOCTOR" is a boon to humanity containing cheap, effective and simple remedies for all diseases. It is based upon several years of laborious research and experiment. The Sivananda Charitable Dispensary attached to the Ashram is a blessing to the residents of Rishikesh and the adjoining localities. Hundreds of poor Sannyasins, Sadhus, Mahatmas and Yogins derive incalculable benefits from it. God-willing and with the co-operation and sympathy of public. Spirited people it has wonderful possibilities to develop into a first-rate hospital with at least 50 beds to start with. Thousands of rupees worth of medicines are being distributed every year absolutely free to one and all without any distinction whatFoever. The Sivananda Ayurvedic Pharmacy is an. Other wonderful experiment in medical research. It specializes in the Ayurvedic system of medicine and has already placed before humanity a number of well-tried and highly remarkable medicines under the direct guidance and supervision of the Maharshi, Its only motto is SERVICE.

As a doctor of mind the Maharshi knows well the minds of others. He is extraordinarily striking in the art of pleasing others. None is generally dis. Pleased with his personality as a man and as a sage. As a teacher of Yoga, he understands the mental growth of every one who approaches him for initia. Tion into the mysteries of Yoga and unerringly pre. Scribes the appropriate path to each. Having tremendous mental powers consequent upon his pre. Fect and thorough mastery over his own mind, it is a profitable delight to watch him in his daily acti. Vities. He has prefected a unique system of enabl. Ing his students to control their minds by giving them unfettered liberty and freedom to do things just as they like and affording them facilities for the same. Those learning and practising Yoga under his guidance feel they are kings and princes with full liberty to work, eat, drink, sleep, pray meditate and serve others in accordance with their own proclivities and propensities. His Ashram is the only place that I know of where rules, regulations and discipline are tabooed. And yet one finds perfect order, joy, peace and a peculiarly divine atmosphere which one misses elsewhere! The Maharshi understands well what is in the minds of others and conducts himself accordingly. His brilliant and matchless treatise "MIND, ITS MYSTERIES AND CONTROL" reveals a prodigious psychologist who is undoubtedly on a par with the most excellent masters or adepts in human psychology, past and present. Who but a genuine and perfected RajaYogi of the venerable school of Patanjali could have produced such a work?

His greatness as a doctor of soul is too wellknown to require any mention here. To the thousands of thousands of yearning souls the world over be is a Beaconlight, a Messiah, a Deliverer, a Prophet, a Yogi, a Superman and a Maharshi without a peer. He has saved countless souls from eternal perdition and damnation. The spiritual light he has lighted in the dense darkness of the twentieth century world will never be dimmed or put out. It will shine through all eternity. The day is perhaps not far off when humanity will recognize in him the modern Buddha, Christ, Sankara or Krishna. If it does not, it is no fault of the Maharshi.

Major-General A. N. Sharma, I. M. S., writes, "Whenever I had a chance of sitting at your (Maharshi's) lotus-feet, I always felt as if I were immediately surrounded by your personality. I was amazed at the perfect equilibrium which I found in your Divine Presence. This Peace flowed naturally from you. I felt as if every suffering, every worry, and every worldly concern had gone completely out of the physical body."

Justice A S.P. Ayyar, M.A., I.C.S., F R.S.L., Barat-Law of the Madras High Court wrote, "It is blessed souls like you that make the world endurable, like candles in pitch darkness. The Divine Life Society people of Malabar speak of the great inspiration you have been to them. From a doctor ministering to the body, you have begun ministering to the Self. May God grant you more and more strength to fight evil as His instrument"

Mrs. Milda Voitols wrote from New York, "You are a Great Soul indeed. You are the only Master who has not disappointed me. I mean you are Great indeed. I have this feeling, when in New York, in the traffic jam, amongst the so busy people; I think of you, and your words sound in my ears. I am so happy that you don't reject me."

The well-known savant, Dr. Hari Prasad Shastri wrote from London: "The knower of Brahman is Brahman Himself. In the Hegelian philosophy a spirit, conscious of itself, is perfection. Such is our Maharshi Sivananda, the glory and pride of the students of Brahma-vidya. He needs no human praise, because the whole creation bows to him in adoration. It is for the sake of a Brahmavid that the earth revolves, and rotates; the spring showers flowers, the stars twinkle to do obeisance to him. The creation dances, the electrons perambulate the proton. To him the glory of a Brahmavid. The Himalayan wisdom has flowed in our Siva; the holy Ganges rolls by the side of his Ashram to carry the echoes of his compassion to the citizens of the holy Bharatavarsha. A breath of Sri Bhagawatpada is materialized in our Siva. His words are the drops of nectar. The Message of Siva is universal. It is above the narrowness of nationalism and politics. It is like the all-embracing sunshine. What more can be said? Om Tat Sat." In another letter the same admirer wrote: "Siva is indeed the Pillar of Light He is a bulwark against materialism. Shanti Sadan looks upon your Holiness as a source of its main inspiration Please continue giving your blessings to us; your children need it."

Mr. Cornelis L. S. Damme, World University Roundtable, a great world-traveller, author and lecturer wrote: "I am happy that you as a Teacher of the East, prepared your countrymen and other races for the coming New Age, in which Spiritual Life will rule heart and head."

Sri P. S. K. Patham wrote from Agra, "You are Lord Krishna, Rama, Siva, Brahma, Om, Omniscient, Omnipotent, and Shakti, etc By your blessings the world will get relieved of sin and purified and will become fit for Moksha."

Mrs. Edith Enna of Copenhagen, Denmark wrote, "What Swami Sivananda has meant to me can scarcely be expressed in words. He came into my life as a revelation, a Messenger from a world I knew only by name-He made a light in my heart, and I think I can honour him best in working for the cause to which he has devoted his life."

The Socretary, Conseil Spiritual Mondial, Bruxelles, wrote, “Indeed, you are, I think, a Master, and it is the first time ta my life that I am in touch with such an one... We are very happy to enter into relations with you. We must join the Orient and the Occident.”

hese are but a few of the thousands of grateful acknowledgements from people scattered in different parts of the globe received by the Maharshi, and quoted at random. Indeed, to do full justice to such letters would mean the publication of a separate volume coutaining the outpourings of struggling souls all over the world and the part the Maharshi has played in shaping their spiritual destinies.

(15) Yogic Physical Culturist: The Maharshi is very fond of physical culture. He is an ardent exponent of the ancient Hindu System of Hatha Yoga with its elaborate Yogic postures, Mudras, Bandhas and Pranayama, and has to his credit a large volume of literature published on the subject. His books, “Yoga Asanas”, “Hatha Yoga”, “Kundalini Yoga”, “Yogic Home Exercises for Men and Women”, “Science of Pranayama” and “Health and Long Life” are all extremely practical and based upon personal experiments and research. He has taught the sciences of Yoga Asanas, Pranayama and Surya Namaskar (Sun Worship) to countless students of Yoga as well as laymen besides innumerable school and college students all over India. At his present advanced age of 3 he spends an hour daily for tuning his own body and keeping it fit and trim through the methods of Yoga Asanas and Pranayama. Needless to say he enjoys excellent health, strength, vim, vigour and youthfulness without the unmistakable signs of old age appearing either on his face or in his movements. I have no doubt that he will live the full span of life allotted to man by the gods.

(16) World Teacher: His philosophy and teachings are universal. They are quite acceptable to the Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians, Sikhs, Jews, Parsis and others By virtue of his own undoubted realization and experience, wisdom, knowledge, spiritual power and grace of the Lord, he is today looked upon by millions of people the world over as a great World Teacher sent by the Almighty Himself to fulfil a great purpose and a Mission, which he is doing in a most admirable and satisfactory manner possible, through the medium of his prolific writings, lectures, teachings and above all, personal example. His is a life of unceasing hard work, for there remains much yet to be done. There can be no rest until his Mission is literally fulfilled. He thinks in a big way and acts in a big way. He is indeed the Full Moon, the Brightest Spiritual Light of the world in the present day. He is playing a mighty role in the Cosmic Drama of Life as God’s most chosen Messenger. The part he is yet to play will be even mora momentous than the one he has already played and when East and West will meet together very soon, the Maharshi’s prestige and position will be unparalleled in the spiritual history of the world. More and more people will begin to see the Christ, Krishna, Buddha and Sankara reborn in the form of Maharshi Sivananda. Mark my words.

CHAPTER XI

SIVANANDA'S INFLUENCE IN EAST AND WEST

"Thou seemest human and divine, The highest, holiest manhood, Thou."

-Tennyson.

Serene, degnified, pure, self-fixed and enthroned upon Yoga; inwardly perfect, full of wisdom, humbler than the humblest, a matchless lover of mankind and a sun in the spiritual firmament of the universe; ever engaged in selfless service of humanity, the Exemplar of spiritual consummation, the bird of Love and Compassion, ever soaring in the atmosphere of holiness, the Presiding Deity of Ananda Kutir and, above all, the Prophet who compels admiration and adoration, the Maharshi is undoubtedly one of the most top-ranking souls ever born to adorn this other wise dull dreary earth and certainly the most distinquished amongst his contemporaries especially in the realm of spirituality.

As the high-priest of modern India, as the Spiritual Force heralding the dawn of a New Era for the entire humanity, as an Adept in Yoga, as an Expert in the Science of the Mind and as a constructive Thinker of the Age, the Maharshi lives an intensely divine life and wills with all his power that every living creature should live with him such a life.

His radiant love is overwhelming. His deep sweetness is enthralling. His profound greatness is unmistakable. His Yogic will is dynamic. The power of his inner life and unalloyed purity, the glory of his Yogic perfection and the divine love that pulsates in every cell of his being easily distinguish him out as the most attractive, the most magnetic and the most inspiring personality I have ever seen or known. He inspires you through love; he teaches you through love he infuses strength and health into you through love; and he transforms you through love! Without love he cannot live even for a second!

The following tributes paid to the Maharshi by the august members of Sri Sankara Mutt, Matunga, Bombay on the former's 63rd birthday sums up in a succinct and admirable manner the Maharshi and his works: "Among the modern saints and thinkers who have purified and enriched the Hindu Religion and philosophy, you occupy a distinguished place. Through your soul-stirring writings, discourses and sincere selfless service, you have carved out a warm place in the hearts of millions of people both in this land and abroad, who hold you in their highest esteem and veneration. As the Founder-President of the Divine Life Society, you have unfolded to every aspirant the glories of Life Divine and have shown mankind the way to attain it. Your serene Ashram, appositely christened ANANDA KUTIR-the Abode of Bliss-from where the glow and wisdom of your inspiring words radiate, shedding a lustre over the entire Bharatvarsha has become one of the sacred places in India and truly reflects your majesty and greatness. As an apostle of Sri Adi Sankara, you have rendered a magnificent and undying work to epread the Vedic culture. For this missionary work you are entitled to the gratitude of all the people to whom the Vedas are the only and highest divine authoriity."

Read again the following tribute by Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati, "After Buddha and Sankara Maharshi Sivananda is the only example of such a dynamic spiritual service."

Perhaps the best estimate of the glory of the Maharshi's life is made by Sri Krishnalal Sharma, Ajmer in the following pregnant words: "I am not exaggerating the fact if I say that our generations coming after 50

or 100 years would consider us luckiest of all for having been in so much close touch with the Great Master of the Age, the like of whom may not come for a long time in the next 100 years."

The tremendous spiritual influence which this quiet holy man has brought to bear upon the process of India's spiritual Self-realization needs no further emphasis. In an age of spiritual confusion and cultural apostracy, when India was at the crossroads of her national evolution, the Maharshi appeared on the scene like a brilliant star with his dynamic message that epitomised the age-long cultural and spiritual heritage of the country. Had it not been for this Venerable Master, India might not have rediscovered her soul which was threatened to be crushed under the deadweight of a soulless alien domination and civilization.

Dr. Gope Guru Bux, Secretary, to the Government of Bikaner once wrote to the Sage of Ananda Kutir: "I have felt that you are the proper parson to lead us in the International Organizations, and that You alone can quide us better than anybody else. On hearing Your Holiness's views I shall write to Hon'ble Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Hon'ble C. Rajagopalachari on the subject."

Barrister Mohd Amin of Lahore wrote during the pre-partition daya: "I thank you for your very beautiful and instructive book "WORLD'S RELIGIONS. You are doing noble work in dispelling hatred and spreading goodwill. This is what is wanted most at present time."

Another distinguished Indian gentleman who would like to remain anonymous says: "After I have carefully read and studied your personal writings on various themes, and the writings of others about your holy personality and your activities, I have acquired a deep persuasion that you are not the least a common man, an ordinary writer, teacher, savant and philosopher; on the contrary, you are of an especial and extraordinary rank. As a man you have attained perfect divinity; as a savant you have acquired the truest knowledge; as a philosopher you have revealed the best system of real wisdom; as a teacher, instructor and educator you have traced the surest path towards human perfection. By your mode of living, teaching and acting you have inaugurated yourself as consummate. A sage, as a finished saint, and as a real living God. You have made of yourself one without a second, a king over kings, an emperor over emperors. When one is given to contemplation upon the brilliant aureola that your holy personality radiates spontaneously, the question arises: Is it not probable that the Almighty God has designated to you the sacred mission-the salvation of modern sinful world, and are not you yourself a real resurrection and embodiment of Siva, Rama, Krishna and Jesus Christ?"

Sri E P. Randiba of Kathiawar haile the Maharshi as "a Rishi commissioned by Ram to uplift those who wish spiritual evolution."

Professor Tan Yun Shan, the distinguished Director of the Cheena Bhavana, Shantiniketan, Bengal, expresses his admiration and esteem for the Maharshi in the following sentiments: "You will stay in this world for another 63 years for the sake of humanity."

In an extremely illuminating contribution entitled "SIVANADA THE TRANSFORMER" to the pagев of the "DIVINE LIFE," Mr. Justice A.S.P. Ayyar, MA,I.C.S., a Judge of the High Court of Madras says: "His Holiness Swami Sivanandaji is too well-known to Indians to need to be introduced to any thinking man in this country. Most people, like me, have not seen him, but all have felt his presence. He is a typical product of Mother India, a Son of God. India has never praised great soldiers or millionaires. But she has been absorbed in the search for God, and therefore, deeply interested in the sons of God who come from age to age to prove the existence of God and proclaim the age-old truths of our Vedas and Upanishads in the living words of living men. These men live for India and do not merely die for her. And living for humanity every moment of one's existence requires greater faith and courage than dying in an exalted moment.

"Swami Sivanandaji goes from Tirunelvelly to the Himalayas, Bhagawan Ramana Maharshi goes from Ramnad to Tiruvannamalai, and Aurobindo from Calcutta to Pondicherry, all in search of God, but all light beacons of the Eternal which no Indian will willingly let die. It is only in India that doctor or a politician leaves his profession for seeking God. Many are the people who have told me that Swami Sivananda has transformed their lives. One big officer from Rajputana told me that he left off smcking and philandering after reading the Swamiji'a pamphlets but could not leave off newspaper-reading and private property! I was asked by him, "How can I leave off all my properties, when charitable institutions issue appeals for funds and I am eager to contribute something?" I replied, "Perhaps Swamiji will be glad if you left off all property and contributed nothing except your loving labour; but I see your point of view too. Cling to your Svabhava and Svadharma, and the Swamiji will surely love you for it." It has been well said that a man who cannot think is a fool, a man who will not think is a fanatic, and a man who dare not think is a slave. The Swamiji wants us to think deeply over his own advice and do what we consider best. Therein lies his unique strength."

Sri Y.N. Sukhtankar, I.C.S., now Governor of Orissa, writes: "Swamiji's own life is a synthesis of the three Yogas Karma, Jnana and Bhakti. Contact with him is ennobling and those who had the good fortune of meeting him even for a short time will long remember his enchating smile which resolves all doubts and difficulties and enshrines peace in the visitor's heart."

Sri C. Rajagopalachari, ex-Governor-General of of India in his letter dated 9th June, 1949 wrote: "Swami Sivanandaji has not only been guiding the disciples who are under his personal attention, but has endeared himself to a vast body of admirers all over the country to whom he has been interpreting the teachings of the ancient Rishis of our land, reinforcing them by the example of his own life."

Dr. Hariprasad Shastri, Shanti, Sadan London wrote: "...New India must be a Spiritual India, or like Japan it will subside like a bubble. The main reponse to the challenge of life and its environment is primarily spiritual. In New India the presence of His Holiness Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj is a very great blessing. He is a most competent teacher of the Science of Brahma-Vidya. His voice is like the roar of the lion of Valmeeki. He warns; he exhorts; he encourages. If India fails to fulfil her mission which is spiritual in character, she will be reduced to the condition of China today. As His Holiness Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj advocates, the Gita and the Ramayana must be our guides in order to bring about a return of Rama Rajya. How really great is the personality of Sri Sivanandaji! May this disciple of Sri Sankaracharya continue long to be our spiritual quide and mentor."

Sri Denys Gray, Argyll, Scotland wrote: "It is herd for those of us living in the West today to find any person or organization disseminating spiritual knowledge. A cursory examination of any of the known, and the not so well-known, spiritual organizations prevailing in this country today prove that all bear the trademark of bias resulting in useless argumentation and antagonism. The seeker after Truth finds himself in a maze of apparently conflicting 'isms' and 'ologies', all proclaiming the merits of their particular creeds, excluding all others, as of no account.

"Sri Swami Sivananda is one of the beaconlights of the New Age of Universality. He is a Maharshi who has not been content to isolate himself among the fortunate few who have attained the goal of life, but has given himself all that he is and has, for the elevation of all humanity. He is a personification of the Yogas. In him are to be found the wisdom of the Jnani, the devotion of the Bhakta, and the activity of the Karma-Yogi. It has been his glorious privilege to reintegrate the scattered doctrines, creeds and religions of not only India, but the world, so that through his life and work any truth-seeker brought up in any denomination, school of thought, Darshana (and what have you) can see his ideal in the person of

Maharshi Sivananda. It will be to the advantage of those who seek after Truth, to pay alle. Giance to Him now that he is still with us in the body.

"As a criterion of his spiritual integrity it is sufficient to indicate that whatsoever question is put to him, he can answer it. This being the case, as has united himself with Lord Siva, his mind being fused or united with the Lord, enables him to transcend the limitations of space, time and causation. Thus he is able to communicate with those of his disciples who are scattered throughout the world.

"He has written many books for the instruction and elevation of his followers, and he has the rare ability to pervade his writings with something of himself, so that every page, indeed every word that he has written strikes deep into the very soul of the reader.

"It might be asked, 'What system or creed does he teach? He does not teach any creed or system; there could be none large enough to contain the wisdom that manifests by the Light that shines in him. You cannot limit the Light of the Atma in mental or intellectual constructions. The Light of the Atma shines in each of us; Maharshi Sivananda has made it his life and work to make that Light shine more intensely in us, and to remove the obstacles as ignorance, shadow, etc.; this is his creed, if it may be called as such.

"His attitude towards Divine Life is one of practicality; mere theorizing is no use; the emphasis is on methodical Sadhana: do selfless service, prey, do Japa, control the mind, conquer the lower nature, direct all your actions to the Divine, give up gossiping and wandering about, fix your mind on Brahman, meditate; let your food be pure, watch your thoughts, and so forth.

"There is no room for Tamasic people who would learn from Maharshi Sivananda. His advice is always short and to the point. An aspirant comes to him to be instructed in meditation. "No use your trying to practise meditation yet," says the Maharshi, "you would only be building castles in the air. Do service without looking for return for two years, do Japa Om Namassivaya and live the virtuous life; then come to me, and I will teach you the art of meditation."

"There are many other things which might be said of Maharshi Sivananda; a whole book could be written about His life and work. He would even go so far as take the Karmic sufferings of His disciples upon Himself and work them out in His own body. Unbelievable ав this may appear, it is true, and although he may seem to suffer, or rather His body does, He will deny it saying, 'What is this body? I am not the body. How can I feel pain or pleasure who am Atma. My friend, you too are not the body, nor the senses, nor the mind, nor the intellect, nor the Buddhi (intuitive faculty). You are my own Atma. I bow to the All-pervading Atma.

"One can only bow in reverence to such a man in woderment and recognition of a Spiritual Giant among us!"

Dr. Henzi Van Zeyst, a distinguished savant from the Netherlands, now of the Theosophical society, Adyar, Madras and an out and out Buddhist at heart recently wrote: "While reading Swami Sivananda's Inspiring Messages, I feel as though several of them were written directly and purposely for me. If his written words have already such an influence over me, how much more shall I be benefited from Swamiji's personal contact, presence and example! Swamiji's letters are very interesting indeed. Though I have developed my religion only from the intellectual point of view, I trust my contact with Swamiji will revive the devotional aspect and set the balance right. I am most grateful for the abiding interest Swamiji takes in my spiritual welfare and I hope that I shall not prove an utter disappointment. I have made an immediate start with the reading of "LIGHT FOUNTAIN" by Prism, which brings me so much nearer in contact with Swamiji's radiating personality. May the Full Moon of Vaisakha which witnessed

the enlightenment of Lord Buddha. Bring forth also in me that spark of love and knowledge which warms my heart whenever I read of Swamiji's endeavour, loving kindness, spirit of service, and deep knowledge of our human needs, physical as well spiritual." As

Under the balmy caption "THE HELPING HAND", the well-known Copenhagen Yogi, Sri Louis Brinkfort observes in the course of an illuminating contribution to the Diamond Jubilee Commemoration Volume presented to Maharshi Sivananda on the auspicious occasion of his 60th birthday by his numerous admirers and followers scattered in different parts of the world: "Although the world's present situation looks very dark, I have the privilege of feeling the cheerful and good vibrations from the hearty and enlightening personality of Swami Sivananda.

"I am not a Yogi; spiritually I am seated in a 'slow-moving carriage', but quite often our beloved Maharaj Swami Sivananda gives my carriage a push forward and lo! I feel the vast stretch it covers on every time-Thanks to God! Through the help of Sri Sivananda I have been the tool that could cure a girl of 11 years ears to gain back her eyesight. She could, during 8 years, hardly distinguish anything unless she wore very powerful glasses. Another case happened to be a man suffering from paralysis on one side of his face and on one leg who could after treatment reckon himself as cured. Also I have been able to help a doctor. For four years he had suffered with dreadful dorcial pains which made him to take narcotics.. After 1 had treated him, he came to one of my lectures and thanked me saying that the pains had ceased entirely. I am indeed pleased to be able to say that the inhabitants of the three Scandinavian countries have been helped through the ability given to me by the Almighty and also through the help of Swami Sivananda. Through the Science of Yoga I will go on helping wherever I can. I humbly and heartily thank Swami Sivananda for all his hearty goodness May Almighty bless him."

Sri Tanis Palape, Bonn, Germany writes under the modest heading 'OUR MASTER OF ANCIENT WIS. DOM" in the September, 1949 issue of the "DIVINE LIFE" as follows: "India's beaconlight of wisdom had attracted many distinguished philosophers from ancient Greece. That 'beaconlight' is the knowing of oneself; it is the permanent law behind all phenomena. Through this knowledge all contradictions are solved, all sufferings abated. But for some great souls as Swami Sivananda, the highest spiritual culture of India would have been lost by this time. After his hard struggle for years in the path of Enlightenment, he has been helping others in reaching the same state of perfection through his words and deeds, at the same time giving them strength, joy and happiness in performing their tasks. May I say, 'Knock at the doors of the great Swamis of India and the highest wisdom and realization of God Almighty will be revealed to you through their loving guidance and blessings. Those who have been in touch with the Master of Ancient Wisdom, His Holiness Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati have found in his person a real friend, ever eager to help others with his valuable guidance. And it is through his holy example that many have been induced to become true followers of the Divine Life, Sannyasins or Sages All glory to the friend of mankind, His Holiness Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati!"

Sri Logan Wilshire, Los Angeles, California once wrote: "As a Christian and an Episcopalian I can affirm that Swami Sivananda has brought me closer to Jesus Christ. Formerly religion for me was largely a matter of outward forms and observances Now, it is within and has become an inner experience. In the writings of Swami Sivananda we find the ancient Yoga psychology of mysticism brought up-to-date and expressed in modern terms. It is a broad path along which men of all religions may travel, even the most orthodox. It seems to me that one of Mother India's greatest gifts to humanity has been this Yoga psychology which comprises methods of developing concentration and meditation for spiritual purposes. This beautifully articulated and arranged system of progressive development from the simpler exercises of concentration to the most profound meditation is a true guide to mystical experience. Swami Sivananda's exposition of this system exhibits the genius of the Spiritual Master. How quickly he glides

from the universal to the individual and back again! No thorny terminology of the schoolmen, his words are simple, yet profound. Happily the Swami avoids the whirlpools which suck the unwary down to bigotry and fanaticism. Broad and deep flowing as the mighty Ganges, he aims straight at the mark and achieves it nobly."

Sri J. H. Hiscocks, Fetcham, England, writes: "Swami Sivananda's books are well-represented in the book-shops of London that cater for devotees of Eastern Philosophy and those who are able to judge and recognize the genuine and pure teachings they contain. Through the words of the Blessed Swami and his example, may they make the Swami's teach. Ings a part of their own."

Sri Bertil Nadell, Stockholm, recently wrote: "I sent you my best congratulations on your 63rd birth. Day, hoping that you will enjoy many years of life and continue to spread the Divine Message through. Out the world for the spiritual upliftment of mankind. And if we all could co-operate and help you in this work, I know that the world will soon be a much better place where all could live with peace and security. I have read many of your books and I must say that they are among the best books I know, as they in simple words teach the profoundest knowledge and I never feel so happy and peaceful as when I am studying them. The influence of your teachings on the Western Thought seems to be very great, and your books have become very popular by this time. In Sweden there are many people who are trying to live up to your ideal of life, and they all express their great admiration for you. For the present I will continue to study your books until I come to India as it is my highest wish to come to Rishikesh and join the Sadhaks at Ananda Kutir."

An admirer from Denmark observes in the course of a long communication: "We all can agree to most of the divine thoughts, ideas and intentions; especially we find the idea in your "ALL WORLD RELIGIONS FEDERATION" very beautiful and necessary in the efforts of making a better world for our mankind. In the Scandinavian countries our mutual friend, Mr. Louis Brinkfort, indeed has done vary much to spread the knowledge of Yoga. Now and then it is read in Danish or foreign European news papers that the thought of Yoga is advancing in the civilized South and Western Europe, but owing to rather high prices only few people in this country, I think, get the right contact with Yoga and the teachers in Yoga in this city, the capital of Denmark with one million inhabitants. I should think it would be a very good idea, if a Yoga Commission from India or from your Yoga Forest University once could visit the Western and Scandinavian countries, arranging meetings for the public and talked about the purposes of the All-World Religions Federation and Yoga. During the last year an 'Americanized' political new movement has grown up here called "ONE WORLD OR NO WORLD" in respect of the atom bomb and the danger for mankind connected to this bomb By means of publications and big meetings with talks from prominent persons they try to gain members here. About the results I cannot say anything, but I think a good deal of people find it a rather good idea."

Miss Edith Enna, Copenhagen, who is a great devotee of the Maharshi and who is running a Yoga school there recently wrote: "Regarding my Yoga school I am glad to tell you that this is constantly growing. I have much to do both with women and children, and have obtained excellent results. I also have small courses consisting of 3 to 4 persons: office and business women, and I am of opinion that have succeeded in giving my pupils part of the essence of Yoga besides the ordinary Asanas..... myself am astonished how easily I have adopted the Eastern mentality. I realize I am receiving a great deal of help from you and am endeavouring to make myself deserved to this. It is so wonderful a thought that far away somewhere in the beautiful Himalayas is sitting a man whose divine thoughts reach all over the world and also me!'"

Sri John M. Short, an Australian student of Yoga writes: "As I read and read of thy words and works day by day, the more wonderful thy life and the more stupendous thy works appear. Even to write to thee

makes me feel as a worm approaching an angel. I have to thank thee for thy book 'UPANISHAD DRAMA' which proved so inspiring. The more I read of thy accomplishments the more I feel how steep the ascent to Godhead must be....."

Professor B.V. Raman, D.Sc, F.R A.S., M.RA.S., Editor of the popular "Astrological Magazine," Bangalore observes: "You have been doing valuable service to humanity in general and India in particular, by your able expositions of our great traditions and philosophy and I am sure all the valuable work that is being done by great souls like you would, in a large measure, counteract the materialistic and mischievous doctrines that have been and are being instilled into the minds of the younger generation by the system of education and civilization that we have had the misfortune to take to."

The Officer-in-charge of the Sringeri Mutt writes: "His Holiness Sri Jagadguru Sankaracharya Maharaj has been pleased to direct me to inform you that your efforts are all praiseworthy and they are necessary during these days."

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, then, President of the Indian National Congress addressed the following communication to the Maharshi very recently: After having made personal acquaintance of Swami Sivanandaji I shall be failing in my duty if I do not send a word of congratulations and thanks for the excellent work that is being achieved in the premises of the Ashram. That the Swamiji has thought fit not to retire from the world of activity but to contribute to its store of knowledge of his voluminous writings and his exemplary life raises the whole order of Swamiji is from the level which has recently come to be associated with such Ashram life. I am afraid I cannot be present in person on Thursday the 8th September, 1949 at Rishikesh in order to participate in the grand celebrations of Swamiji's 63rd birthday. But my spirit is with Swamiji and his Ashram and I wish it prosperity, continued progress and neverceasing work in the service of fellow-men."

Sri NC Ghosh, M.A. writes from Calcutta: "Maharshi Sivananda is not only the greatest seer of the age but also the greatest lover of mankind. It is such a joy to know that people in India and abroad have begun to turn towards the Light that Swamiji is. We all need the magic thrill of his transforming touch."

Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar, Editor, "Kalyan", Gorakhpur writes: "Swamiji's life is so full of divine activities and tireless spiritual enthusiasm that every day of his great life should be considered as a сета. Monious occasion by the vast number of his followers."

"In this campaign of the spiritual conquest of the world," writes Sri Brijlal Nehru, New Delhi, "of course, we have in you one of the biggest leaders and I have no doubt that the aim you have in view will be eventually fulfilled." Another enthusiastic admirer from Bangalore, Sri P.M Damodar writes, "Had I a hundred voices, a tongue of steel, and a throat of bronze, yet I cannot define the good you are doing to humanity."

Professor R.C. Mahendra, M.A., Ph.D, Herbert College, Kotah writes: "-In modern India you have done the greatest work in spiritual awakening and religious literature. You truly represent India in ancient tradition."

A highly-placed officer of the Central Government, New Delhi wrote: "The force of your joyouslyflowing stream of love infuses a new spirit in all those who have the good fortune to meet you. This powerful under current of spiritual vibratian emanates from you constantly. You are like the great Ganges on the sacred banks of which you live."

To Dr. Mahendranath Sircar, M.A, Ph. D., of the Calcutta University, "Swamiji is the meeting-point between the East and the West," while to Sri N. Ramanadhan, BA., Sub-Editor, "The Leader", Allahabad,

"Sri Swami Sivananda belongs to the line of Divine Teachers..... the Buddha, the Christ and Sri Krishna."

Mr.T.Clive-Rose of Mesars Rider & co, London says: "I have personally enjoyed Swami Sivananda's writings and find his contributions to the "DivineLife" particularly inspiring."

Yogiraj Vibhuti Swami Nityananda of Karamadai writes: "They (friends from the Theosophical Society Inner Circle at Adyar) are blessed in fact to be the first bathed in the Divine Aura of Swamiji's Effulgent Light."

Sri K.S. Venkataramani, M.A., B.L, Madras wrote: "There should once again arise a Ramadas Sivaji combination to renovate India and I have a feeling and a faith that Your Holiness plays and will play a distinguished role in this work."

"How radiating all round the world your influence has been in disseminating Divine Knowledge" writes Sri Madan Bihari, an Advocate from Motihari, "can only be gauged by persons living outside. Divinity has so much manifested in this Rishikesh-body that everybody who comes in contact in whatever way feels its exhilarating influence. It was only a Divine Plan in action that my son contacted Your Holiness and had the tenor of his life entirely changed."

The "Champion", Calicut in its issue dated 9th May 1948 writes: "Swami Sivananda is a spiritual volcano who offers from the depths and stillness of the Himalayas a panacea, the only one, by which man can redeem himself and become all-powerful."

Professor KRR Sastry. Principal Law College, Jaipur paid the following tribute on the Maharshi's 63rd birthday:

"Salutations to Thee on Thy sixty-third birthday,

A Life of power, Service and Bliss,

A Spark that has lit back the fire in many seekers,

A Source of Hope and Joy for the depressed,

A Lighthouse to guide the fallen and misled, A Karma-Yogi of unique merit, One who points out to Release, Here and Now. May the Cosmic power spare your mortal frame to serve us all."

None but a perfect sage of the calibre of Maharshi Sivananda will have the guts to chastise the heade of the various governments of the world. In a poem entitled "A CALL TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE WORLD' the Maharshi observes]

"Now Ashramas are run by Sannyasins,

Vairagees, Bhaktas and Yogins alone. There are only a very few Ashramas. Their activities are limited for lack of funds. If governments take up this work, We can have Ashramas in each district. There will be peace and plenty everywhere. Satya-Yuga will dawn. India will rise again to its original spiritual glory. We will have abundant Yajnavalkyas, Nachiketas, Sadasiva Brahmans, Dattatreyas, Gargees, Madalasas, Sulabhas.

O Premiers! Wake up, wake up! Kindly take up this work immediately.

This is the dire need of the hour. You are building up new towns for refugees. Build Yoga Vedantic Ashramas and Universities For the children of refugees.

Wake up, Mr. Stalin, Mr. Truman and Mr. Atlee! Wake up UNO, UNESC O and O-es and Co-es! Wake up all scientist, educationists and culturists! Train Yogins, Vedantins, Bhaktas, and KarmaYogins.

Herein lies the Master-Key for World Peace, Highest Culture and Supreme Civilization." In another rhyme entitled "A CALL TO UNESCO

TO TAP THE SOURCE" the Maharshi sings:

"United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Will hold its plenary session in Paris in October, 1949.

Educationists, Scientists and Culturists

Representing 59 countries of the world

Are its members.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Representative of India,

Is the Chairman of its executive at present.

It is doing good work in its own way.

The members are trying to effect lasting peace.

They are highly-cultured people;

And yet they are groping in darknese,

Because they have not introversive Sadhaks and Seers;

They have no renunciation and inner life.

They can talk and deliver lectures;

But they have not tapped the Source

O' Light, Wisdom and Power.

Let UNESCO establish Yoga Vedantie Centres;

Let the members practise Yoga and Vedanta,

Let them be equipped with Yama and Niyama and

Sadhana-Chatushtaya.

Then it will have undying glory!"

Almost every religious, spiritual, or philosophical convention or congress held in any part of the world invites Maharshi Sivananda to take part actively in its deliberations and to contribute to its success. Although it is not possible for the Sage to visit those places on account of his very busy daily life and various other pre-occupations, he invariably responds to their request for his message and sends his greetings and good wishes together with his message. I cannot resist the temptation of quoting in extenso a message he sent to the Fourth World Spiritual Congress held at Assisi, Europe on 8th September, 1949 which date incidentally happens to be his 63rd birthday;

“Greetings to the spiritual heroes of the West from the Himalayas, the Home of the Eternal Spriitual Science May God bless your individual and collective endeavours with glorious success!

“Yours is the great responsibility today of combating the forces that are opposed to the Great Ideal which you hold as dear to yourselves. These forces are anti-Divine or diabolical Success is assured: for you have on your side the mighty powers of God Himself. The ancient Hindu Epic of Mahabharata has a lesson to teach us in this regard. Two opposing forces the Pandavas (representing the righteous and divine) and the Kauravas (representing the unrighteous and diabolical-both approached Lord Sri Krishna for help. The Lord who is an impartial friend of all promised to help both and asked each one to choose between having Himself (a single person) or having His Army (of countless warriors). The diabolical chief chose the latter! He wanted material strength and the wealth of numbers. The Pandavas chose to have the Lord Himself. How do you think the war ended? With glorious success to the Pandava (the divine forces) who preferred to have the Lord Himself and refused to be tempted by the armies and the wealth.

“An important lesson you can learn from this story. Nothing in the world can conquer you, if you are rooted in righteousness, if you take care to have the Lord Himself on your side by developing in you divine virtues. Fear not even if you feel lonely, if you find that in your camp there is only one-yourself! For you are in reality never alone; the Lord is always with you. You are unconquerable. Then stand up and be adamant. Make your choice now, and choose the Lord; spurn the glamour and the riches and the worldly power as pieces of broken glass.

“Of greater importance than these messages is the Message that still remains vibrant in the Holy Place you have chosen to hold the Congress Session in Assisi. It at once brings to your mind the great St. Francis who had followed just the live that I described above. Are you, each one of you, prepared to throw away all worldly riches, all social dignity, honour, name, and fame, the lesser loves of family, country, religion and creed? then: invoke His blessings. Think of St. Francis, He had universal love in his heart. To him every one-even to the minutest insects was sacred, the child of God Universal Love, my dear friends, is that!

"You have chosen the right path. In due time, you will be able to come by this great treasure of Universal Love. Your very presence will spell Love. A look or a glance from your eyes will convert a murderer into a saint. To a man of God every living thing is sacred. Turn away from all violence. Never even be in the remotest sense an Instrumert of violence. People with a kind heart who would not themselves bear to see a hen being butchered would love to take chicken-soup served on the table! They lack the power of visualization. Their intellect is dullened by latent cruelty. They forget that though they may not actually commit the crime, they are indirectly responsible for the taking of a life. Avoid even this. We even now hear of legends of how saintly men in days of yore used to live on dried leaves and grass; they were unwilling to take the life of even plants! That should be the ideal, Banish from your minds all thoughts of armaments, guns and revolvers. Then would the Devil have been cast out completely from the heart.

"Follow the noble example of St. Francis. Let there not be the slightest trace of violence even in your preaching. Not a word would leave your lips nor an expression flow from your pen that would injure any one’s heart. No threats, no curses, no mud-slinging of any sort! Perfume your epistles with love. Sweeten your writings with the honey of love. “Keep away from politics altogether. Renounce

National leadership; become divine and then you will become the leader of humanity even as St. Francis was. Refuse to have anything to do with any political party that has in its creed even the least trace of violence We hear so much nowadays of the downtrodden poor man being uplifted, of the misery of the factory labourer being alleviated: but all that has been done is that this misery has been transferred to the rich, the wealthy and the capitalists For a moment reflect: forget this man is rich; the other poor. What do

you find? MAN. What have these political parties been doing? One party tiraded against Man, the poor; the other party traded against Man, the rich.

“Real communism is possible only when your heart is filled with Universal Love, for then you will Bee with an equal vision the entire humanity. The rich men would gladly and willingly distribute their wealth among the poor, even as St. Francis did. All men and women will be happy. That is real capitalism, too:, for every man’s spiritual wealth, the Wealth, of Divinity, would have been considerably augmented. All these political ‘isms’ would sound a mockery before that great Francisianism, the Religion of Love, Purity, Service and Godliness.

“Each one of you assembled here today is truly a saint-in-the-making. Some of you have already scaled great heights The future for divine organizations such as yours is greet; though in common with all that is divine, we may have, in the immediate future, to undergo hardships and privations. Patience and forbearance are the health symptoms in one who regularly takes the beverage of universal love. Individual inner evolution is as important as social service. Dear friends, meditate. Reflect. Worship the Saints Think of their lives. Then a mighty wave of inspiration will spring forth. In you will manifest a Power that would conquer the whole world in the twinkling of an eye.

“Collectively, meet together as often as you can, in small groups. Compare notes. Discuss problems. Learn from each other’s experiences. Evolve and become saints.

“May the blessings of St. Francis of Assisi be upon you all! May God bless you all! May you all, united at heart, achieve spiritual victories! May your Mission be fulfilled! Om Tat Sat.”

Such indeed are the innumerable ways in which the Maharshi contributes, imperceptibly as it were, to peace on earth and goodwill towards all men. Tangible proofs of the effect of his mighty influence upon one and all, big or small, are being seen even now!

STORY OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

LAST THOUGHT

From the pamphlet on Sivananda, the one fact most obvious was that he is quite an honoured and respected Swami. Many people asked the Swamiji questions, and made known their difficulties. One man asked him if he should notify his family that he was dying and Swamiji answered, “No because, then you might think of them as your final thought rather than thinking of God.” He also advised against “habits” (snuff and even newspaperreading!) because one was apt to think of these as he was dying.

I also learned his definition of Karma Yoga Work expecting no fruits and he gave a short discourse on the fruite one would receive anyway-namely, the erasing of the bad effects

-Barbara Budge.

CURE BY GOD’S NAME

Sivananda’s pamphlet gives a prescription for a man’s wife an “unfailing formula” which included a long chart for the sick woman. Saying “Ram, Ram” is the cure.

Advice to children that Sivananda gives appears as a formula for their day from morning until night. Good health is very important; truthfulness is one of the most important virtues a child must learn; thinking about God is essential; it should be the first thing in the morning as well as occasionally during the day.

The main thing stressed in the pamphlet was formulas for actions during a person’s life for daily activities and an unfortunate illness.

-Barbara Hultgoen.

IN A NUT-SHELL

The Sivananda’s pamphlet contained in so very few words, so much of thought. I was impressed by the succinctness and clearness of the teachings. The Divine path which Siva nanda takes most of his time to define. Seems so clear to him, that he might go on forever generating on endless number of parables without reiteration.

-A Student

SIVANANDA’S MESSAGE

There is a Supreme Essence. Philosophy is an expression of the way to this ultimate He then went on to state many concepts that are combinations of many ideologies. His main message was a plea to return to religionnot a petty, low level religion-but a high level religious way of life that transcends all diffe. Rences. Only this way can we achieve world. Unity, harmony and peace. The U.N. should actively further the development of this religious life. Men should work together to develop this religious way of life in order to bring about peace which we all desire.

-Lois Jefsen.

SIVANANDA’S TEACHINGS

Sivananda's teachings seem to fall into two classes. First, as a Karma Yogi, he teaches the good life-meditation, moderation, hard work, honesty, gratitude, happiness, unselfishness, etc.

Then as a Yogi mystic he teaches how to reach Samadhi. He points out that ambition for selfish ends necessarily leads to frustration and that the only way to avoid frustration and live a happy life is to give up ambition. This requires forgetting the selfish personality and discovering the Atman. This discovery will give the person a suffish sufficently detached view of himself to allow renunciation of selfish ambition.

Sivananda would recommend Yoga as a means of obtaining Samadhi, but a less severe Yoga than the one required by other Yogins.

-Rex W. Kramer.

SIVA'S WRITINGS: A GREAT INSPIRATION

In his pamphlet Sivananda gives direction to his followers. He describes what a Sage is and what he

Does. The main point that I got out of it was that you should do away with desires.

The pamphlet was full of things to do and things not to do. It definitely gave moral direction. For example, it said, give up drinking and don't take narcotics.

As the pamphalet emphsizes working in the world and not just meditating, it must be, I am sure, a great inspiration to many Yogis.

-Mary Curtis.

ESSENCE OF SIVANANDA'S TEACHINGS

What I learned from Sivananda's pamphlet. First of all in seeking the Divine I must be sincere. I must not doubt. Through Yoga and meditation I can acquire serenity. This must not be quietness of body but of thought and must avoid all regress if possible but I should profit by my mistakes. I do not have to seek after the great transcendent because the divine is all around me. I must be tolerant of others' beliefs if they are sincere. I need not go on pilgrimages or fast or do any other overt ceremonious acts. The Divine is all around me My devotion to the Divine is an inner drive. I must be conststent and keep prodding along.

I learned that man is achieving a higher purpose; that through a type of evolution the super-conscious man will arise. At first, there will be few of these men but they will increase They will be egoless. Their main purpose will be the Divine.

-Nan Baker.

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Sivananda Tooth-Powder
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THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY
WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1936 BY SRI SWAMI SIVANANDAJI MAHARAJ AND IT EXISTS TODAY TO SERVE YOU !

1. By dissemination of spiritual knowledge far and wide. By training spiritual aspirants in Yoga and Vedanta through the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University. By the establishment of institutions like
   (a) The Sivananda Charitable Hospital,
   (b) The Sivananda Primary School,
   (c) The Sivananda Ayurvedic Pharmaceutical Works,

   In order to exemplify in themselves the tenets of Life Divine, to inspire and guide mankind, and to give a lead to the leaders of the world in this respect.
2. THE INSTITUTION IS ENTIRELY MAINTAINED BY YOUR SUPPORT AND CO-OPERATION !!

   YOUR CONTRIUTIONS WILL ENABLE US TO CARRY ON THIS WORK ON A GRAND SCALE !!

   Your token of goodwill, support and co-operation will be gratefully welcomed and acknowledged by

   The Secretary, The Divine Life Society, P.O. Sivanandanagar, Rishikesh, U.P.

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA

Born on the 8th September, 1887, in the illustrious family of Sage Appayya Deekshita and several other renowned saints and savants, Sri Swami Sivananda had a natural flair for a life devoted to the study and practice of Vedanta. Added to this was an inborn eagerness to serve all and innate feeling of unity with all mankind. Though born in an orthodox family, Swamiji was broad-minded and catholic, pious and devout.

His passion for service drew him to the medical career; and soon he gravitated to those parts of the world which most needed his service. Malaya claimed him. He had also commenced editing a Health Journal and wrote extensively on health problems. He discovered that people needed right knowledge most of all; dissemination of that knowledge he espoused as his own mission.

It was divine dispensation and the blessing of God upon mankind that the doctor of body and mind, renounced his career and took to a life of renunciation to qualify himself for ministering to the soul of man He settled down at Rishikesh in 1924, practised intense austerities and shone as a great Yogi, saint, sage and Jeevanmukta.

In 1932 he started the Sivanandashram. In 1936 was born the Divine Life Society. In 1948 the Yoga Vedanta Forest University was organised. Dissemination of spiritual knowledge and training of people in Yoga and Vedanta were their aim and object. In 1950 he undertook a lightning tour of India. In 1953 he convened the World Parliament of Religions. He is the author of over 200 volumes and has disciples all over the world, belonging to all nationalities, religions and creeds. To read his works is to drink at the Fountain of Wisdom Supreme and grow spiritually to be immortal and eternally peaceful and blissful.